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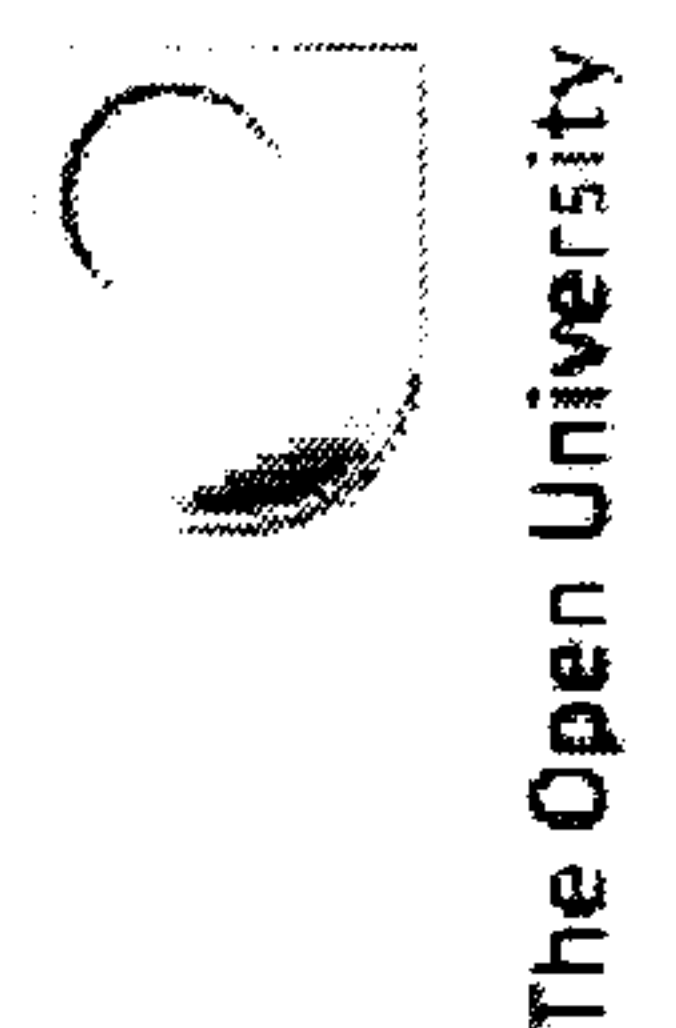
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The Impact of the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads

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2008



Date of award: 29 July 2008.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Kate Spiller, Headteacher of one of the Case Study schools whose life was taken from us during the course of this research. Kate was an outstanding leader and her legacy of leadership lives on in her school.

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to my wife and children for their support during the period of researching and writing for this doctorate dissertation. Their patience and support has been invaluable.

Thanks also go to my tutor at the Open University whose tenacity and punctiliousness have kept me on track. When I was at the point of giving up, he was not. Thank you, Nigel, for having faith in me.

Final thanks go to Catherine Rowe for all her help in proof-reading the final version.

Contents

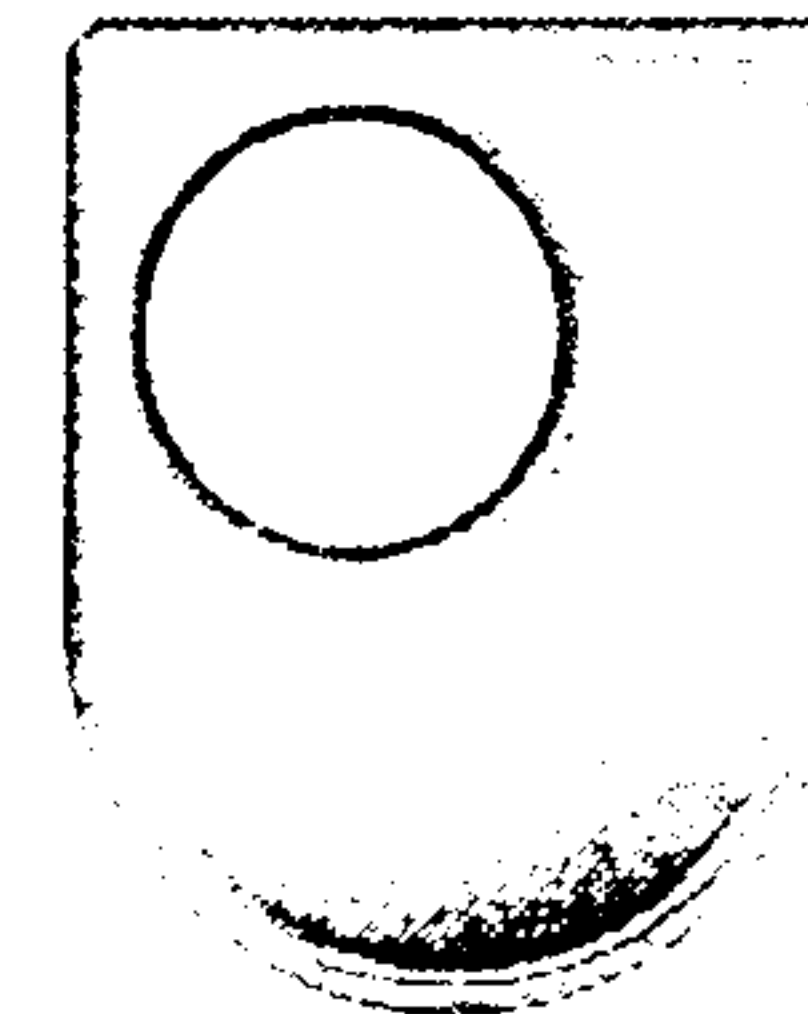
List of Figures and Tables.....	6
Abstract	7
1. Introduction	9
The Origins of the LPSH Model:.....	15
Contextual Background to the Programme	20
The issue of Impact measurement	23
2. The Literature Review.....	27
Leadership or Management? Defining the terms:.....	27
Models of Leadership	29
Theoretical Perspectives	32
The Impact of Followers on Leaders	39
The Leadership Construct	42
Relational Leadership.....	44
Distributed Leadership	46
Leadership Traits.....	48
Traits and school effectiveness	50
Leadership styles	51
Situational Theory	60
Contingency Theory	63
Path-Goal Theory	71
Leadership Substitution	73
Cause and Effect.....	76
Attribution Theory	76
Links to School Effectiveness.....	83
Training Fit for Purpose	88
The Impact of Leadership on Performance	90
Conclusion.....	92
3. Methodology.....	98
Research Question.....	100
The Selection of a Qualitative Research Method	101
The Pilot Study	102
Background to the LPSH Model	102

Setting up the Case Studies	104
Bias: the objective role of the researcher	104
Recognising the context of the school:	107
The Training Model used in LPSH:	108
Time Pressures on the Researcher	109
Maintaining the integrity of independent research	110
Improving Reliability:	116
Research Strategy	120
The Research Design	120
Selecting the Cases	121
Selecting the Range of Case Study Schools	122
Gaining Access to the Case Study Schools	122
Protecting Anonymity	123
The Interviews	123
Recording the Interviews:	126
Analysis of the Interviews	128
4. The Case Study Schools	130
School A	131
School B	133
School C	134
School D	135
School E	136
5. The Case Studies	137
Analytical Process	137
Analysis of Findings from the Interviews	137
Delegating to improve staff morale and understanding	139
Facing the harsh reality of people's perceptions	144
Renewed energy and drive for change	151
Time for reflection	154
Accountability	159
Vision for the school	163
Leadership styles	166
Effectiveness	170
Limitations of the LPSH and its impact	171
Impact	175
6. Conclusion	186
APPENDICES	196

Appendix I.....	197
Appendix II.....	201
Appendix III.....	212
REFERENCES	219

List of Figures and Tables

	Page
Figure 1.1: Teacher Career Development Pathway	13
Figure 1.2: NCSL diagram of Leadership Development Stages	14
Figure 1.3: Measuring the Impact of Training in Leadership	26
Figure 2.1: Management Perspectives	32
Figure 2.2: LPSH Management Styles	35
Figure 2.3: The Managerial Grid	55
Figure 2.4: Leadership Style Continuum: Degrees of Participation	57
Figure 2.5: Leadership Behaviour Continuum	58
Figure 2.6: Situational Leadership	61
Figure 2.7: Fiedler's Contingency	65
Figure 2.8: Leadership decision styles	67
Figure 2.9: Key questions when making a decision	68
Figure 2.10: Decision tree for group problems	69
Figure 2.11: Substitutes and neutralisers for leadership	74
Figure 3. 1 Interview Timeline	104



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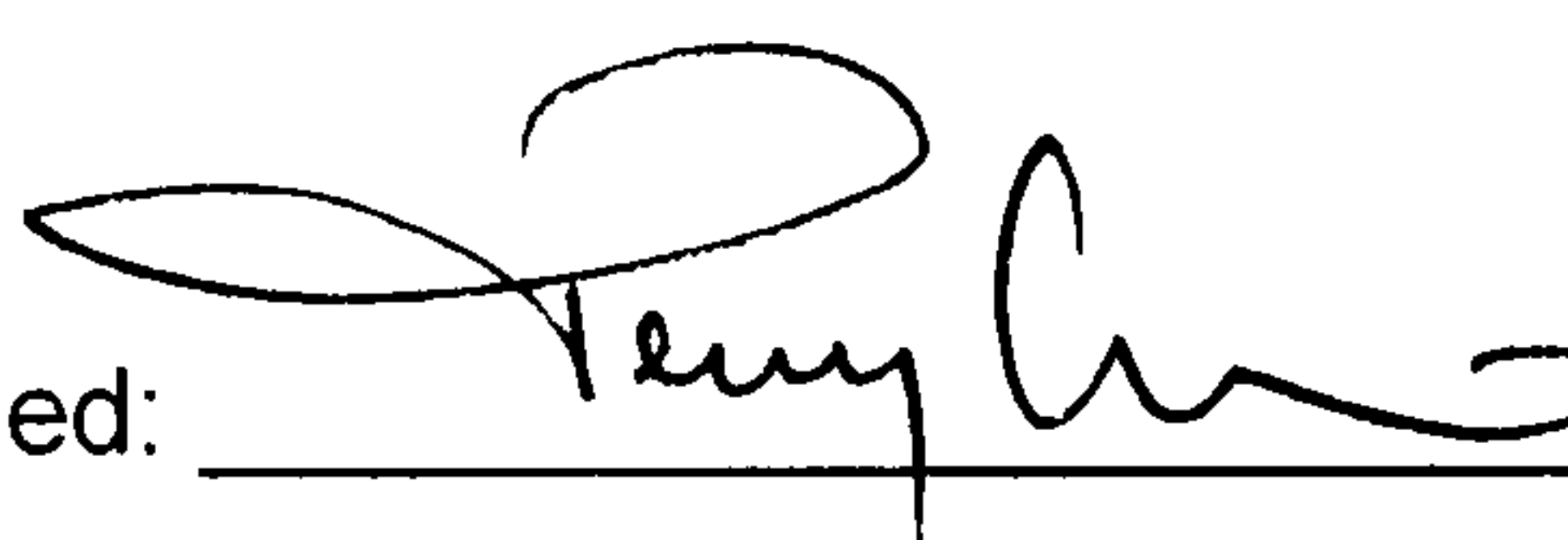
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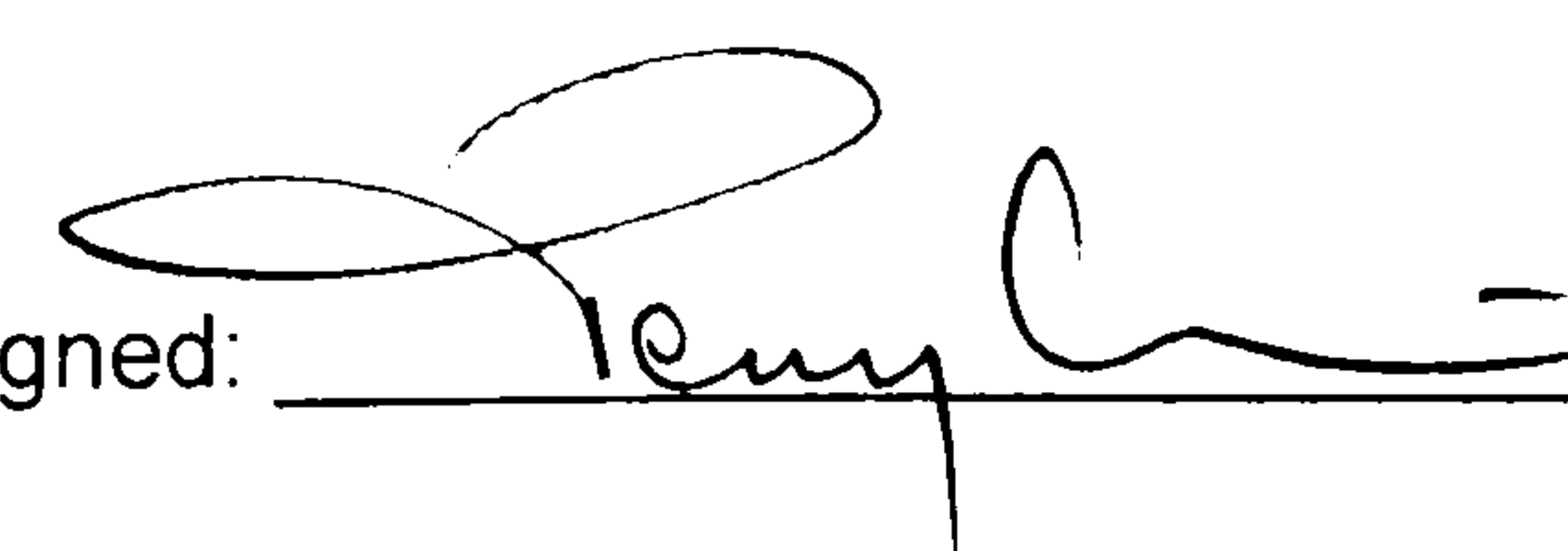
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Abstract

This dissertation explores the impact of the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads (LPSH). It focuses on the process of the course and how this has influenced school leaders in the way that they run their schools.

Firstly, the dissertation looks at the literature involved in leadership, training and measuring the impact of training on practice. Following this, there is an analysis of the methodology used and the research tools associated with a qualitative approach to study in this field. The data is then analysed against the theoretical perspectives of leadership. Finally, the findings from the case studies based in five English schools are analysed to try to identify any indications that changes and improvements in leadership have been as a result of attendance on the LPSH by the Headteachers of the case study schools .

This dissertation looks at the assumptions set out within the programme by tracking through the key elements of leadership and training.

Through this research, I have tried to discover the true impact of the LPSH in shaping and challenging experienced Heads in the leadership of their schools. I have looked at how some of the LPSH participants have adapted or maintained their leadership strategies and styles within their own institution. This has been achieved through two sets of interviews with the Headteachers and a range of teaching staff within their schools, matching their perceptions of the impact of the programme on them as leaders against the perceptions of their co-workers. From this, I have been able to draw some conclusions related to the views of the interviewees within these case study schools.

The research demonstrates that the Headteachers involved did believe that the LPSH had a positive impact on their leadership, either through

reflecting on their current approach and deciding that what they were doing was in line with best practice or by challenging their view and changing the way that they operated as a school leader. Similar perceptions were noted from their co-workers.

The Headteacher participants of five case study schools gave feedback on how they thought that the LPSH had changed, and in many cases, improved their effectiveness as leaders in their schools. Similar feedback was demonstrated by teaching staff working within the case study schools, adding weight to the reliability of the findings.

As with all small scale qualitative research, there are many limitations to the findings from the study. However, it is hoped that this research has identified some areas in leadership training and its impact in changing and improving leadership practice in schools that can then be taken further and investigated so that improvements in the quality of leadership training can be made for the benefit of school leaders.

1. Introduction

As a school Principal, I am particularly interested in the process involved in training school leaders to undertake their role more effectively and respond to the needs of colleagues in their school. The UK government has placed significant focus on education and the role of Heads in developing their schools as efficient institutions for the improvement of standards in education. In order to achieve this improvement in school effectiveness, the UK government has given the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) a remit to raise understanding of the principles of educational leadership, taking on board the research in this field. As a trainer, I am also interested in how such courses like the LPSH can impact on this development through the context as well as the processes that are employed on the course to challenge, and where appropriate, to change the leadership styles of Headteachers.

The LPSH is one of many programmes designed to support experienced Headteachers as they cope with the changing demands placed upon them. There are many leadership programmes from short leadership training programmes to fully accredited Masters Degree courses. The difference with this programme is that it has been promoted by the NCSL, which is a government funded organisation. The NCSL portrayed the course as a high quality training course for serving Heads. It has, therefore, been endorsed by the UK Government and is seen to promote the concepts and ideas of how the government wishes school leaders to run their schools.

This dissertation explores the impact of the LPSH as judged through feedback from Heads who have experienced the course and a cross section of their staff. The central aim of the work was to try to identify a link between the course and its influence on school leaders in the way

that they operate within their schools. If leadership development is considered to be useful in schools, then there should be some measureable features of the influence of leadership training on participants.

Schools have placed great emphasis on the quality and regularity of in-service training for staff. Primarily, this has focused on the work of the teaching staff, school managers and leaders. As new legislation has come into play with regards to the workforce reform agenda in the UK, this has included developments for associate staff. The aim of any staff development programme should be about improving individual performance to ensure greater performance for the organisation in terms of improved profits or better quality outcomes. In education, the outcomes might be measured in terms of pupil performance or efficiency gains. Bolam (1987) states that:

“The ultimate aim of staff development is to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The immediate aim is to improve the performance of those with teaching and management responsibilities.”

Bolam (1987, p.2)

Taking a competency-based approach to professional development (see Boyatzis, 1982 and Cameron 1985), training programmes are designed to develop skills and competencies of staff. If we believe that it is possible to learn and enhance our competencies in leadership (see Boyatzis 1982) then it is reasonable to deduce that training can improve leadership in schools. If this is the case, then the training of school leaders is vital if schools are to offer students the best opportunities in learning. This learning is not simply focused on the role of the Headteacher but on all members of the teaching community. The NCSL claims that leadership is not under the total control of the Head but that

others within the organisation can influence the outcomes in terms of effectiveness if given adequate scope to do so. From this comes the premise that school leaders should develop a more open and collegiate approach to the leadership functions in schools. The LPSH aims to challenge the notion of the hero Head and positions itself as a programme designed to nurture the devolved and distributed leadership functions of all members of the school community.

As such, the NCSL has supported the concept of distributed leadership that promotes delegation of leadership responsibilities throughout the organisation as a means of achieving ownership of the goals within it. This might at first seem to be in conflict with the establishment of a specific programme to focus on the development of school Heads rather than a programme designed to impact on all levels of leadership across the school. However, in making the Heads the focus of the training, NCSL have set out a scheme to try to make Heads aware of the role that they play in developing and forming leadership capabilities across the school through a leadership strategy that involves and includes others in the leadership of the school.

In order to understand the LPSH, it is important to recognise its position within the leadership pathway as a suggested route for Headteachers to take in their career through Headship. Prior to taking on the lead role of Headteacher, middle leaders such as Department Heads or Primary Subject coordinators, are described as “Emergent Leaders” and are encouraged to pursue the NCSL Programme, “Leading from the Middle”. Those in more senior roles, using members of the school leadership team, are expected to prepare for the next step by completing the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). This programme was originally contrived in 1997 under the auspices of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA). From September 2009, this will be a

compulsory requirement for appointment to first headship in the English State School system and has shifted control of this from the TTA to NCSL. A revised version of the NPQH is being prepared for first implementation in 2008. Once the Aspirant or Developing Leaders have achieved this qualification, they are then able to apply for Headship posts and, if successful, take on the role as a New Leader.

For recently appointed Heads, the NCSL offers two programmes of support through the “Headteacher Induction Programme (HIP)” and “New Visions”. The experienced leader with a minimum of three years Headship experience is then able to join the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads (LPSH). This programme has recently been reviewed and is now under the banner of “Head for the Future”. At the top of the career ladder is the role of the Consultant Leaders who are encouraged to share their knowledge with other school leaders by engaging in training and mentoring schemes for aspirant and newly appointed Headteachers.

The anticipated pathway for teacher development based on the principles outlined by NCSL can be represented as follows (see figure 1.1).

Teacher Career Development:

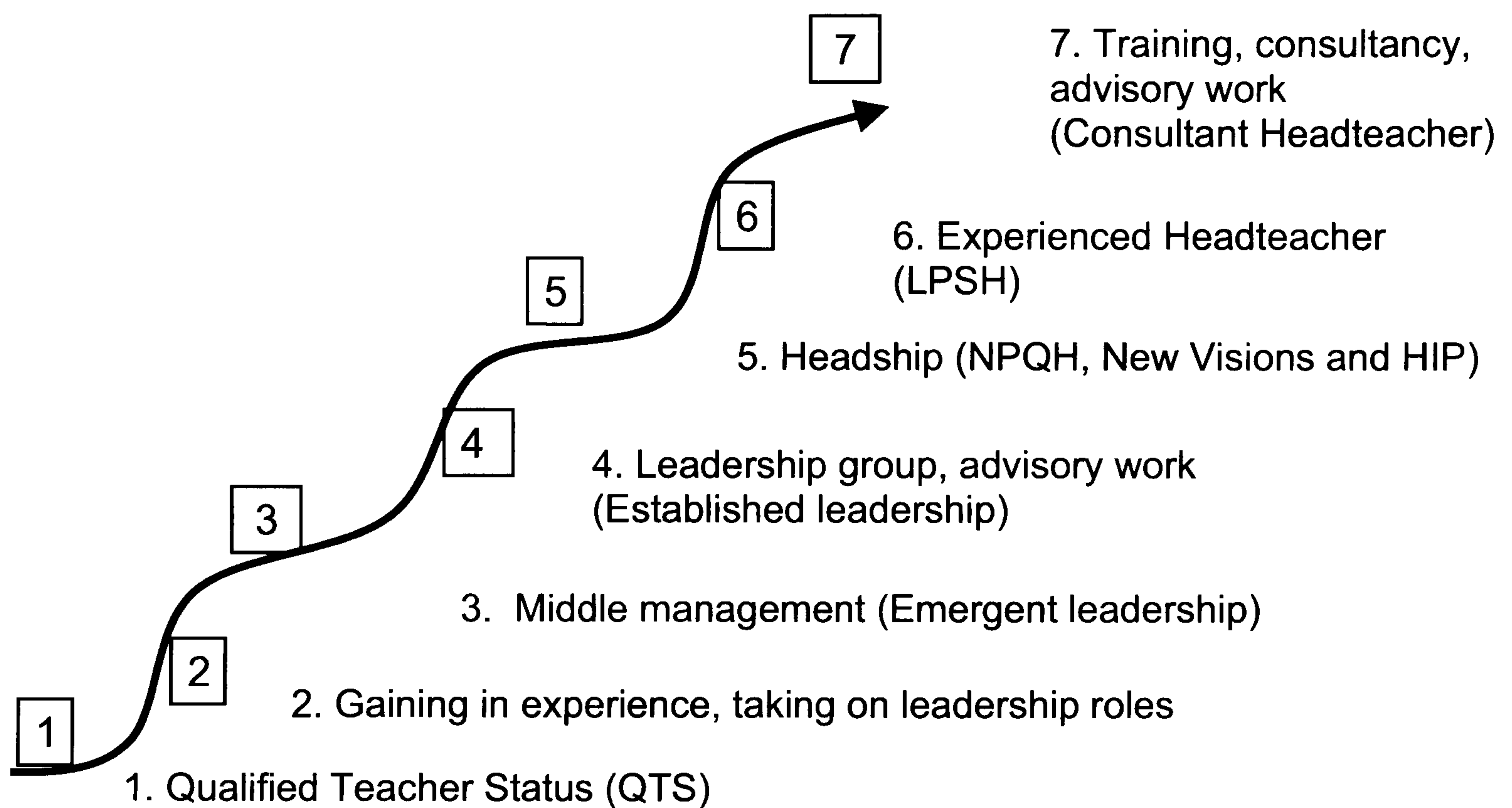


Figure 1.1: Teacher Career Development Pathway

Using just the key stages in leadership development from the NCSL, this can be represented as below (see figure 1.2), in which it can be seen that the LPSH programme is targeted at the Advanced Leadership stage or Experienced Headship level.

The NCSL show the five stages of leadership in a simple diagram, highlighting the levels of training offered by the college:

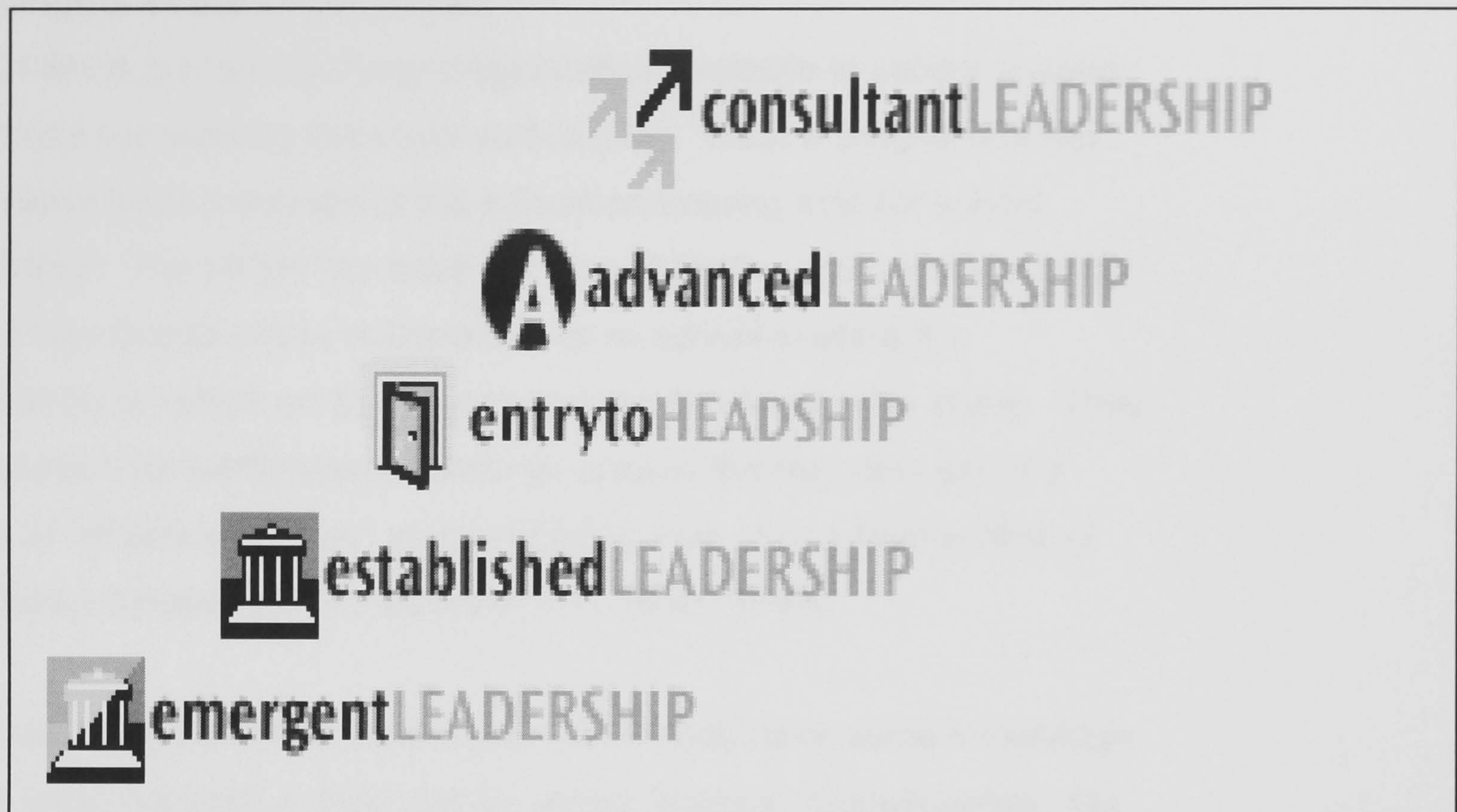


Figure 1.2: NCSL diagram of Leadership Development Stages

Bush (2005) gives a more detailed summary of each of these stages in leadership development. In his summary of the Advanced Leadership stage, he points out that whilst:

“... certain features, including the quality of the trainers and the focus on the school’s needs, were valued, several weaknesses were identified, notably the focus on individual leaders rather than the leadership group.”

Bush (2005, p.9)

Here, Bush challenges the NCSL to ensure that training programmes fit into their aim of recognising the power of distributed leadership in schools.

The Origins of the LPSH Model:

The LPSH is just one of many programmes available to school leaders and those considering taking on such a post. Such a programme has not always been prevalent in the education training field for school leadership. The LPSH has been developed for the educational market by the Hay Group and is designed to allow school leaders the opportunity to reflect on their competencies and leadership styles. They then place their performance rankings against the Hay data set of a group of “effective leaders” as identified by Hay. For a brief outline of the course please refer to Appendix I (C. Wolff, 1998)

It is expected that LPSH participants will already have some knowledge of the tasks required in their role as school leaders. Consequently, the course focuses on what might be deemed the more intricate aspects of leadership style; developing the vision, culture and goals of school leadership.

This dissertation focuses on the impact of this particular programme in helping school leaders understand their strategic role in their individual institutions and meeting the goals of the course. These goals are not so much explicit as implied. They centre on the view held by the NCSL that sharing the vision and gaining ownership of the direction of the school is fundamental to school improvement.

The LPSH is set on a number of objectives aimed at raising:

“the performance of pupils and staff in schools by enabling Headteachers to develop further their leadership qualities and give them an understanding of:

- *models of organisational and leadership effectiveness*
- *the impact of the Headteacher’s leadership on the school*
- *what highly effective Headteachers do to raise standards*
- *the participant’s own development needs*
- *the key issues in the participants’ schools which need to be tackled in order to achieve improvement targets*
- *the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for personal development and school improvement planning.*

(OfSTED, 2002, p.16)

The NCSL model of leadership development sets out different leadership styles based on the work of Hay Group. This is promoted as “the” model, implying that there are no others of significant value. NCSL claim that there is “a clear focus on the model of Leadership Effectiveness” (NCSL, 2001, p.14) although I shall argue that this is only one model of effective leadership based on the Hay Group Programme, for which they own the copyright. The very fact that the NCSL do not have direct ownership of the programme makes it difficult for them to challenge the integrity of the leadership training under LPSH. In the 2001 review, it was suggested that “*NCSL should negotiate with the Hay Group to ensure access to the aggregated data*” (NCSL, 2001, p.16) because they have to base their evaluation of the impact of the course “*on hearsay and reassurances from the Hay Group*” (NCSL, 2001, p.18).

In order to obtain some objectivity in the research, this study reviews the impact of the programme from an independent perspective through case study interviews.

John West-Burnham (2006, p. 4) criticises the LPSH as being “an event rather than a process”. He argues that “leadership cannot be taught; it has to be learnt” (p.1) which is why the coaching aspect of the programme and the development of co-coaching networks has been a significant improvement in the LPSH since its review in 2001. It is no longer simply a leadership training programme but rather more of an opportunity to reflect on current practice as a leader, set out modifications (change processes), establish action points and review progress with peers on the same programme. A similar criticism was launched by OfSTED when HMI reported on leadership and management training in April 2002. In the report, they criticize the lack of follow-up work to the programme, highlighting the problem of longer term engagement in a reflective learning process. They also noted that the LPSH did “*not always meet the needs of Headteachers from a variety of contexts and there is no effective monitoring of the outcomes*” (OfSTED, 2002, p.,5). This leads us to ask whether the LPSH is a content-driven course or a process of development led by course leaders. I believe that it is a combination of the two in that participants are offered a simplified background into leadership styles and are encouraged to reflect on their use of these within their schools. The process of reflection is supported by the course trainers, the feedback from co-workers and the interactions amongst the other participants in the training cohort.

Dame Patricia Collarbone wrote a comprehensive review of LPSH in August 2001. The review looked at how the programme “*supports Headteachers in raising achievement for all pupils*” as well as the

“quality, relevance and timeliness of the development experience provided by LPSH” (NCSL, 2001, p.4).

Whilst the report provides a useful outline of the context, background and ambitions of the programme, it should be remembered that this was commissioned by the NCSL and therefore might not stand up to the rigours of objectivity that an independent study would be required to do. The report highlights a number of issues on the LPSH which led to a revised programme and, more recently, the replacement of LPSH with a new training programme, “Head for the Future”. This was despite one of the key recommendations that the programme should be retained. Some of the recommendations involved a review of existing teaching methods to include more experiential activities supporting the view that the programme was process driven rather than focused on content. However, the review also noted that some of the resources needed updating emphasising the content element of the programme. The new course includes many of the features of LPSH such as the 360° appraisal and the residential experience. It has also responded with the inclusion of a more focussed plan of school based activities based on an agenda for change with a final one-day workshop a year after commencing the programme.

The LPSH was founded on the concerns that school leaders need some form of refreshment to re-motivate them and to keep them focused on their work in schools. There was a growing anxiety that Headship was considered no longer to be a positive step for career progression due to the complex nature of the role and the unpredictable changes that would be placed on them. An article in The Guardian (Ross, 2006) pointed to the results of a GTC survey that identified just 4% of teachers were looking at headship within a five year period, demonstrating that becoming a Headteacher is not

seen by teachers as an attractive proposition. The response to concern over the lack of interest in taking on Headship posts led to a major initiative by NCSL on succession planning and a re-focus on training programmes to encourage greater uptake into Headship. The problem associated with such a move is that the NCSL, as the government body responsible for devising and managing leadership training in our schools, will fall into a single model of leadership. There had been a significant shift away from training programmes that are dominated by *“centralised pronouncements on preparation for headship”* that, according to Maw (1984) *“have concentrated more on the professional than the managerial aspects of the role”* (Maw, 1984, p.8). NCSL could be in danger of reversing this shift if training programmes promote a single style of school leadership.

Macbeath and Oduro (2006) point out a range of factors leading to a reduction in the number of teachers wanting to move into headship. These include the changing nature of headship; unrelenting change; stress; workload; accountability and bureaucracy; personal and domestic concerns; salary; social factors; the teacher supply line; and, intensification of the role. They acknowledge that this is an international problem and recognise the important part played by NCSL in addressing the professional needs of heads:

“In England the establishment of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) was in recognition of the disparate nature of provision and the nature of the gap that existed between theory and practice”

Macbeath and Oduro (2006, p.13)

This dissertation explores some of the factors affecting school leadership training and tries to assess the impact of the LPSH on school leaders. In this introductory chapter, with its accompanying Appendix, I

have tried to set the LPSH in context. In Chapter 2, I go on to look at the literature on school leadership and training with a focus on the theoretical perspectives. Attention is then focused on the research in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 outlines the contexts of the Case Study Schools and Chapter 5 analyses the data drawn from the interviews at the Case Study Schools. The final Chapter summarises the main findings and draws out issues for further work in this field.

Contextual Background to the Programme

It is important to acknowledge that the model of leadership as presented through the LPSH is only one of many. It is also important to recognise the widely held view of the centrality of the Head as the key influence on school performance. A number of commentators emphasise this:

"I've never been in a high-quality school and not seen a very good Principal...If you do not have effective leadership, you just can't have successful schools....I think you need good teachers, but you need environment to maximize their teaching opportunities."

(Georgia Professional Standards Commission, p.2, 2003)

In the UK, when looking at good schools, government agencies noted that *"without exception, the most important single factor in the success of these schools is the quality of the leadership of the head"* (DES, 1977, p. 36.). For these reasons, it is essential that these crucial lynch-pins in school performance are properly trained and supported.

The "OTTO" (One-Term Training Opportunity) experiment was an attempt to provide high quality training for Heads beyond a simple educational perspective on their role. It was based on a development of

the skills and attributes required of effective managers. Hellowell (1988) praises the professional development it gave to those involved but it was not sustained and a training gap re-appeared. Alongside these government-led initiatives, the development of MA, MSc and MBA courses from academic and management institutions continued to grow during the 1970s through to the turn of the century. These training programmes were considered to be effective ways to train aspirant Heads as well as ways to develop the skills and abilities of serving Heads and to keep them motivated in their roles. As the TTA took over control of training in Headship, the NPQH was followed in the first year of Headship by Headlamp, a bespoke training programme geared to the specific needs of individual Heads. The LPSH was targeted at established Heads to meet the gap in training that they might have experienced had they not benefitted from NPQH or Headlamp.

Since the creation of the NCSL, government ambitions for training school leaders have been channelled through the College. The NCSL claims to have the interests of school leaders at its centre and points out that it was set up to improve school leadership because:

“Successful leaders make a difference for their schools, their colleagues and their pupils. Effective Leaders are able to guide their schools through the challenges of an increasingly complex environment.”

(NCSL, 2004a, p.4)

Whilst this may be a laudable aim, it is important to draw links across different models of leadership training and leadership styles into an understanding of the school effectiveness movement. Furthermore, in order to understand fitness for purpose of the LPSH, it is relevant to consider best practice in leadership and its impact on raising standards in schools. This is about expectations

that recognise that the best type of leadership practice should be focused on impact in terms of increased outputs. Consequently, any leadership training scheme should aim to demonstrate best practice as a means of high impact.

In the late 1990s, the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE, 1999) and the Teacher Training Agency (see Hansard, 1996) tried to focus on the impact of In-service training on output measures in terms of improved academic standards. The Quinquennial Review of the TTA (19 May, 1999) raised issues about Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and how training programmes need to be measured, as part of the CPD for teachers, in terms of their impact on improving the quality of teaching and, subsequent to that, the quality of learning by students. In particular, it questioned the role of the TTA as the guardian of teachers' professional development. This, in turn, has raised issues about the value of different programmes developed to support the National Standards for Teachers and for Headteachers, one of which is the LPSH.

The focus on impact was central to the TTA review of CPD and, consequently, must be central to any evaluation of the LPSH. Establishing means to assess impact is a weakness in educational in-service training. Since the Quinquennial Review, the TTA has been re-branded as the Training and Development Agency for schools (TDA) and has taken on a significant role in professional training programmes. The NCSL took over the running of training programmes including LPSH and, whilst these were out-sourced to external bodies, there remained a great deal of centralised control over the approach and content of the programme, linked to the agreed set of National Standards for Headteachers. This shift in central control to independent responsibility for Headteacher leadership development was significant in that it

signalled the opportunity for a more open market in the provision of support for Headteacher development. In reality, the NCSL programmes were tied to centralised controls even though the delivery of the programme was outsourced. A more open approach was now being encouraged in the development of new leadership programmes by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust as well as by private providers. With this external delivery of programmes comes a greater need for consistency across different providers to ensure that quality levels are maintained. One means for doing this is to quantify the output measures by assessing the impact of the LPSH in different regions with different providers. This has yet to be attempted and is beyond the scope of this study. There are clear quality assurance mechanisms to measure the quality of the input from facilitators but insufficient strategies to measure the impact of the LPSH on participants' leadership development as it affects performance in their schools.

The issue of Impact measurement

When investigating the impact of leadership as an activity in schools, it is essential to look beyond the functions in leadership of the Headteacher and see how leadership activities are promoted and pursued by others within the organisation. For this reason, the study looks at the relationship between the Head and other staff at different levels of the school. The LSPH takes little account of the impact on others as a result of the learning process and focuses on the leadership skills, knowledge and styles used by the participant Heads. This is congruent with the view of "charismatic" leadership but one that Bryman (1992) criticises because of its limitations in recognising the importance of others within the organisation for influencing its leadership. It is also in direct conflict with the stated aims of the NCSL in supporting distributed leadership.

Whilst the LPSH does recognise that there are social, cultural and contextual influences on teacher performance, the dominant factor remains that of the influential leadership of the Head. Consequently, the key from the LPSH perspective is the relationships that the school leader forms with others in the school.

Bennett and Smith (2000) accept that measuring impact as a direct result of training is not possible. Their discussion of the acquisition of leadership skills and attributes recognises that the learning process is a more complex process than an input-output, mechanistic or competency approach where development in leadership can be subsumed into a checklist of skills, attributes and knowledge. They cite the work of Hallinger and Heck (1999) which demonstrates the “*relationships between aspects of leadership action and school performance outcomes*” (Bennett and Smith, 2000, p.5) and even then the link was only indirect. Rather than try to prove a statistical cause and effect pattern in terms of school performance outcomes related to leadership development, they turned their attention on perceptions of those involved in leadership and management training programmes. Learning from their work, my research follows a similar line in trying to gauge the impact of the LPSH as felt by the Heads and their staff.

The work of Bennett and Smith (2000), Guskey (2000) and the work of Solomon and Tresman (1999) were good starting points on the impact of professional development on the practice of the classroom. A study in the USA (Vandenberghe, 1998) has looked at the type of training that school leaders choose and how it impacts on their practice. Apart from evaluative studies looking at specific training courses, the issue of impact on leadership as an influencer of others and, ultimately, of the success of the school, is underdeveloped.

Leithwood and Levin (2004) presented a paper to the DfES in February 2004 that focuses on ways to measure the impact (or effect) of leadership training on school leaders. In this research paper, they note the complexities of indirect and mediated modes for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership programmes. They quote McCarthy (1999) who asserts that the link between leadership and learning effectiveness is unknown. This, they claim, is due to the limitations of the methodology of evaluative research, leaving too many questions unanswered. This was a worrying document for my research because it criticises the methodology of capturing people's opinions about the quality of training programmes and their impact in schools. My study does not try to evaluate the content or training process. Instead, it aims to look at the impact of the LPSH as viewed from the perspectives of participants and colleagues within their schools. I wanted to see for myself, through this research, if it were possible to draw conclusions from people's perceptions about impact. As such, when undertaking the research I was conscious to ensure that interviewees were not placed under pressure to give me answers that they felt I required. Later, in the methodology chapter and again in the analysis of the interviews at the case study schools, these issues are re-visited. It is for the reader, then, to decide whether the arguments I put about the validity of the research stand true for them. Despite these misgivings, it was pleasing that McCarthy (1999) recognised that the causal link between leadership and school results was a difficult one to establish without a very sophisticated framework. Adapting the impact measurement framework proposed by Leithwood and Levin (2004, p.6) , it is possible to identify the way that the impact of the LPSH might be measured with an emphasis in this study on the views of Heads. I was particularly looking at how Heads and their staff recognised any impact of changes in leadership functions within their school contexts.

Leithwood and Levin (2004, p.6) set out a framework for reviewing the impact of training on those involved within their schools:

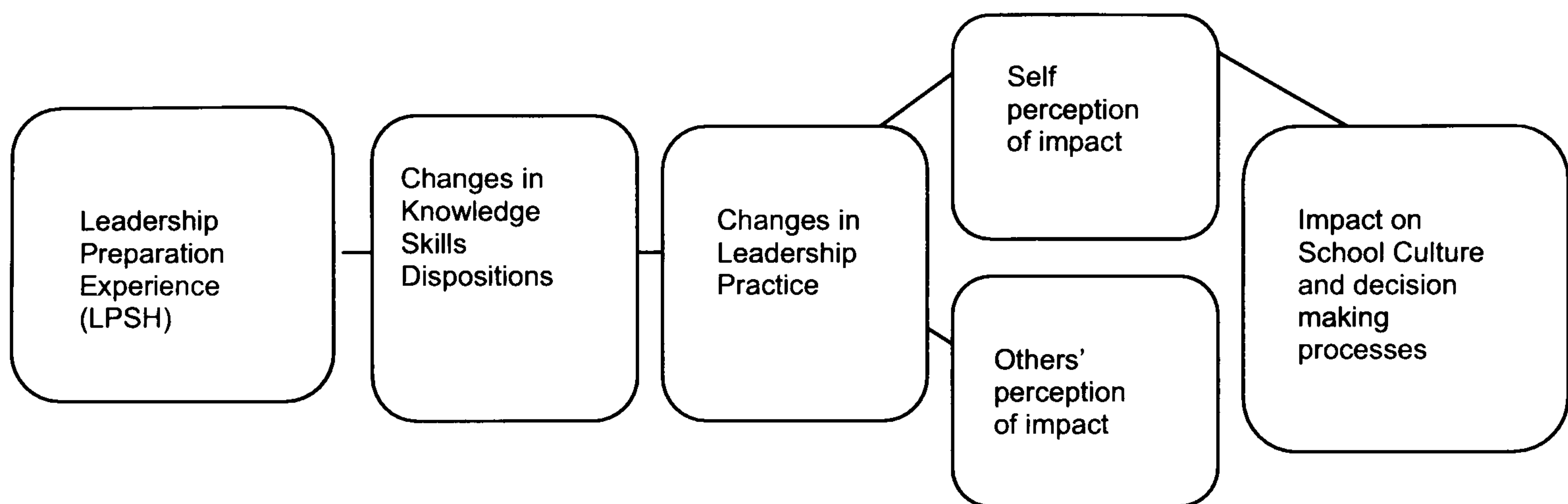


Figure 1.3: Measuring the Impact of Training in Leadership
Adapted from Leithwood and Levin (2004, p.6)

This structure has been used to inform the process of this research.

Leithwood and Levin (2004) also refer to work in progress with the Wallace Foundation. Unfortunately, this is not yet completed but will, in time, add to a growing area of study. They retain their view that *“leadership makes a small but significant contribution to educational outcomes”* (2004, p.10). Consequently, any course designed to improve leadership should also be designed to improve educational outcomes. In a paper presented to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Leithwood and Riehl noted that *“leadership has significant effects on student learning, second only to the effects of the quality of curriculum and teachers’ instruction”* (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003, p7).

2. The Literature Review

In reviewing the literature for this study, I have tried to identify a range of concepts and styles as they apply to leadership to understand how this impacts on the content and structure of the LPSH in particular. I have taken a thematic approach to the review to give an account of models of leadership in order to contextualise the LPSH as a leadership training programme. The review is focused on providing background information that then features as part of the analysis of the case study schools. Consequently, there are references back to this section in Chapter 5 to show how my analysis of the case studies has been influenced by the literature in this field.

Leadership or Management? Defining the terms:

The LPSH is targeted at experienced Heads who are referred to as leaders rather than managers. The use of the word “manager” as opposed to the use of the term “leader” does need some clarification and it is important to recognise that the LPSH is focused on modern day leadership activities that might in previous decades have been considered functions of management. The distinction between the two is made more explicit in writings towards the end of the 20th Century but the view that management is distinct and separate from leadership has not always been as explicit as might be the case today. For example, the Management Grid cited below (Blake and McCanse, 1991) refers to management activities, yet the use of leadership as a term is almost interchangeable for many of the areas covered and retains significant relevance within the confines of the model. Indeed, Drucker (1998) argues that the two are:

“part and parcel of the same job. They are different to be sure, but only as different as the right hand from the left or the nose from the mouth. They belong to the same body”.

(Drucker, 1998 in Covey, 2004).

According to Bennis and Nanus (1985, p.21), leadership is about path finding and doing the right things, whilst management is about path following and doing things right. The LPSH is about both these aspects and does not easily distinguish between the two, preferring to support the act of doing things in the right way as well as promoting a creative approach based on doing right by people through a greater understanding of the influences of emotional intelligence. The leadership development with the LPSH is more about thinking strategically and creatively, having and communicating a vision of where the organisation is heading and a strategy for achieving this (see Senge, 1990; Hawkins, 1994; Davies and Ellison, 1999; Ancona, 2003).

Kotter (1990) argues that management is concerned with ‘consistency and order’ whereas leadership is concerned with ‘constructive or adaptive change.’ Supporting this assertion, he identifies four major ways in which management and leadership differ in terms of planning for achievement; task allocation; monitoring effectiveness; and, predictability for future developments.

Firstly, management is primarily said to involve planning for the achievement of results and then organizing resources, including people, to implement those plans. Leadership involves developing and communicating a vision for the future of the organisation, or a part of the organisation, and communicating that vision to those directly involved in the organisation and its external stakeholders. Power and the

relationships amongst staff with the leader allow leaders and staff to influence decisions within the organisation. Secondly, management involves the allocation of tasks in line with plans, staffing them appropriately, delegating responsibility and monitoring the implementation of plans. Leadership involves communicating this so that others understand and agree with it. Thirdly, management involves monitoring the results of the plan, identifying problems and then solving them. Leadership is concerned with motivating and energising people, appealing to their needs and values so that they can overcome barriers to change. Finally, management produces predictability and order so as to guarantee consistent results, whereas leadership produces far reaching change that makes the organisation more successful and competitive. It is often the case that leaders do and have to involve themselves in organising, planning, scheduling or controlling operations (Campbell et al, 1970; Mintzberg, 1973; Prahalad and Doz, 1984). Yet, as Mintzberg highlights, leadership of others and the organisation is the specific role that all effective managers must undertake. This aspect is covered within the LPSH.

Whilst there will always be some overlap between definitions of leadership activities and management tasks, the best leaders must have a grasp of the skills of management alongside the characteristics of effective leadership.

Models of Leadership

Shackleton (1995) defines leadership as involving three components: influence, goal and group. Leadership, he suggests, is *“the process in which an individual influences other group members towards the attainment of group or organisational goals”* (Shackleton, 1995, p.2). Leadership is about motivating people to achieve goals. According to McKenna (2000):

“Leadership is a force that creates a capacity among a group of people to do something that is different or better.”

(McKenna 2000 p. 353)

This is a particularly important perspective because the use of the word ‘force’ highlights the idea of power and influence more akin to a coercive leadership style than that promoted as the most effective by the NCSL LPSH course. Implicit within these definitions is that leaders exert influence in order to effect improvement. Traditional views of power, based on military leadership, concern elements of direction, command and control (see Ball, 1987). These might be aligned to the LPSH coercive model. Contrary to this are more subtle systems for exercising power through influence brought about by skills and knowledge. This approach might be aligned to the authoritative leadership style set out in the LPSH training programme.

Power can be defined as the ability to control the actions of others. Sometimes this can be a legitimate process that has some form of social approval based on a level of authority being recognised in the post-holder. Weber (1947) defines three types of authority. The first is the legal/rational in which actions are justified in terms of accordance with law, advice, belief and values and is aligned to definitions of management. We can also have the charismatic/affective type of authority which predominantly rests on faith in the leader following the right course of action. The direction may not be rational in terms of a logical strategy but can be accepted by a majority of interest groups. Weber recognises that this can be more open to challenge but is an essential counterpart to the rational/legal style. Finally, there is the traditional view of authority where the leader knows best. This is almost

a blind acceptance of the power of the legitimised leader as a figure of authority whose actions should not be questioned.

Harling (1984) identifies a fourth source of organisational authority based on professional norms and skills. Peabody (in Bush, 2003, p.25) calls this the 'authority of competence'. In the LPSH programme there is a strong element of developing the competences of participants through the reflective and instructional process on the programme.

Understanding leadership beyond simple competence levels whether measured against baseline performance or, as in the case of the LPSH, measured against high performance based on the data set from the Hay Group, is essential in any training programme to recognise the different types of power and authority held by leaders and perceived by followers.

Like the NPQH, the measure for effective school leaders in the late 1990s was promoted by a competency-based approach emanating from the Teacher Training Agency. We have moved away from a strict definition of competence as *"the ability to perform job requirements to a required standard, and to be able to transfer the skills and knowledge to new situations"* (Trotter, 1994, p.8) into a model towards higher level expectations in performance:

"...an individual's 'competence' can be thought of as the degree to which he or she has been found to exhibit the 'competencies' which have been derived through job analysis as being important for effective job performance."

(Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996, p.27)

Theoretical Perspectives

Writers in the field of school leadership and management have set out their views on different types of leaders. Bush (2003) gives a clear summary of this, setting out the different perspectives on educational management theory. These can be summarised as follows:

Perspective	Key authors
Bureaucratic/rational	Weber (1947), Harling (1984), Bartlett (1991)
Collegial/democratic	Noble and Pym (1970), Campbell (1985), Gronn (2003)
Political	Baldrige (1971), Hoyle (1986), Ball (1987)
Subjective	Greenfield (1989) , Best (1983)
Ambiguous	Cohen and March, Weick (1976), Bell (1989)

Figure 2.1: Management Perspectives (adapted from Bush, 2003)

Each of these models of leadership has particular features that prevail in the institution.

The Bureaucratic rational model is predicated on a “problem to solution” process. The senior member of staff in a hierarchical organisational structure is the person who holds greatest power and exerts the greatest influence. The bureaucratic model focuses on systems and structures to secure efficiency and effectiveness. Bartlett (1991) described the model as having:

“a complex division of labour, stable authority channels, power centralised at the apex of an hierarchical system, one directional communication, impersonal relationships, standardisation and an assumed value neutrality.”

(Bartlett, 1991 p.23)

Hargreaves (2005) challenges the single leadership attribute of many declaring that, in a modern world, this is no longer a feasible way forwards:

“In highly complex, knowledge-based , everyone's intelligence is needed to help the organisation to flex, respond, regroup and retool in the face of unpredictable and sometimes overwhelming demands. Locking intelligence up in the individual leader creates inflexibility and increases the likelihood of mistakes and errors.”

(Hargreaves, 2005, p.180)

The Collegial model challenges the notion of the hero Headteacher and the typology of the individual as the sole influencing factor in the school. The focus on the Headteacher in the LPSH programme should not be seen as a statement that followers and distributed leadership are not relevant to the programme. The course promotes the team concept of school leadership through the skills and attributes employed by the Head. This is a similar viewpoint to that raised by Gronn (2003) who argues that the relationship between staff and leaders is more important than the charisma of the single Headteacher. He argues that it is *“the interdependence between leader-managers and their colleagues, rather than the dominance of the former over the latter”* (Gronn, 2003, p.155) that makes for effective leadership. In order to encapsulate this idea in the LPSH, the use of the 360 degree appraisal scheme tries to take on

board the views of colleague followers. In the collegiate school, team working is at the core of its effectiveness. The shift from the bureaucratic, hierarchical model to a collegiate, self-directed team approach is a natural evolution and one that appears to be supported by the course. Gronn quotes Barker (1999, p. 4) who notes that *'the most popular planned organising innovation is the transformation of a traditional, hierarchically based organisation to a flat confederation of self-managing teams'*. (Barker, J.R., 1999, in Gronn (2003), p.109)

In the Political model, the power play between individuals and the micro-political machinations associated with deals made behind closed doors are greatly enhanced. Ball (1987) presents such a view of schools as one *"where interpersonal influence, compromise and behind-the-scenes negotiation are as important as formal procedures and official meetings"* Ball (1987, cover sheet). This is not encouraged in the LPSH as a way of working by Heads.

Bush argues that leaders will be influenced in their actions depending on their perspective. For example, those with a bureaucratic perspective will demonstrate rational-empirical actions. Those with a collegial perspective will demonstrate normative and re-educative attributes, and those with a political (conflict) perspective will demonstrate power-coercive strategies (see Bush, 2003). Whilst the content of the LPSH recognises that different approaches are required in different situations, it appears to set out a preferred way of leading schools regardless of the particular viewpoint of the Headteacher.

From these models, it is possible to identify the combination of styles used within each recognising that no one perspective can be singularly applied to any one organisation. Bush argues that a combination of these styles can be found to different degrees in schools and, as is

discussed later, the context and variable influencing factors have an impact in altering the balance of perspectives according to the particular situation at a particular time. It is the focus on leadership style that is the focal point for the LPSH Programme. The course design recognises that it is at the individual personal leadership implementation process that the greatest influence can be achieved. Consequently, there is a refocusing from "models" of leadership to "styles" of leadership and, ultimately to the "traits" of those leadership styles. In LPSH terms, these leadership styles can be represented as follows:

Coercive - uses many sanctions and few rewards; gives directives rather than directions; useful for simple, straightforward tasks.

Authoritative - has a clear vision and provides long-term direction; is prepared to justify and to take responsibility for the direction; useful where there is a clear aim and people are buying into it.

Affiliative - aims to avoid conflict and to develop harmony; avoids confrontation; useful for getting to know people and how things are done around the school.

Pacesetting - focuses on task accomplishment to a high level of excellence; tends to take the lead; useful in managing change.

Democratic - encourages participation and seeks consensus; aims to seek commitment through ownership; sometimes useful when the leader is not clear about the most appropriate direction.

Coaching - encourages the development of others; identifies strengths and weaknesses; useful for long-term development of people and the organisation.

Figure 2.2: LPSH Management Styles

(Source: NCSL LPSH programme (1998), *author's interpretation*)

Leithwood and Levin (2004) accept that there are a range of leadership practices that can be adopted in educational organisations but caution about matching the type of practice to the activity and outcomes required, suggesting that different leadership practices “*ought to be considered a ‘necessary but not sufficient’ part of an effective school leader’s repertoire*” (Leithwood and Levin, 2004, p.1). This suggests that we need a more flexible and more comprehensive training programme to nurture a full range of leadership strategies justifying the NCSL approach through the leadership development stages (see page 14 above) and requiring us to consider the range of training programmes in the continuum of training rather than focusing on just one individual programme within the series.

Leithwood and Levin (2004) highlight the importance of using different styles within different contexts, recognising that differing priorities for schools require different strategies. The main goal of the NCSL is to “*provide a single national focus for school leadership development, research and innovation*” (NCSL, 2001, p.9). Consequently, it is encouraging that this is picked up by the LPSH model and is similar in approach to that used by Likert (1967). This demonstrates that the design of the LPSH has drawn on prior understanding of leadership styles. The programme also draws on contingency theory which recognises the different needs of the organisation as a changing feature of the context in which it is operating. However, it cannot be deduced from this that the NCSL has not been selective in what it has chosen to put forward as a model of ‘best practice’.

As one model for categorising leaders, Likert (1967) proposes four styles of leadership:

- exploitive authoritative;
- benevolent authoritative;
- consultative; and,
- participative.

I found that by using Likert's terms, it is possible to identify a reasonably close match to the LPSH styles. Although not a perfect fit, the principles of a range of leadership styles apply within the LPSH as with Likert's analysis. In the case of the exploitive authoritative style, the leader is perceived to use fear and threats as motivational tools, and to adopt an extreme top-down approach to communications reflecting the LPSH "coercive" style. Leaders adopting a benevolent authoritative style are said to encourage performance and a limited upward flow of communication in line with what they want to hear. Leaders adopting this style allow limited delegation of decision-making. The consultative leader reflecting the LPSH "democratic" style is described as someone who uses appropriate rewards and allows subordinates a moderate amount of influence in some decisions. However, leaders adopting this style are still seen as encouraging top-down decisions. Finally, participative leaders reflecting the LPSH "coaching" style with elements of the "affiliative" are described as people who discuss economic rewards and make full use of group involvement when identifying and fixing performance goals and possible improvements in work methods. Where there is participative leadership, subordinates and leaders are described as being psychologically close and there is widespread group decision making. Within such a climate, individuals are also likely to be members of more than one group in order to promote inter-group links, cooperation and understanding.

It is difficult to fit the LPSH “pace-setting” style into Likert’s descriptions although aspects could be seen in the exploitative authoritative style.

In the 1980s, when models of management and leadership were being taught in Masters Degree programmes, there was an acknowledgement that some perspectives were more acceptable than others. Lashway (2003) summed up the changing emphasis that urged “*principals in one decade to be ‘bureaucratic executives’ followed 10 years later by ‘humanistic facilitators’ and then ‘instructional leaders’*” (Lashway, 2003, p.1).

The content and structure of the university-based programmes focused on academic studies through extensive literature reviews and dissertations as an assessment method and then related this back to practice. The courses were tied into criteria “*set by university committees*”, which, more recently have been “*informed by the national Quality Assurance Agency*” (Bush, 2005). As these university-based courses developed, school-based assignments were included. During this period, the political or coercive styles were apparently given serious health warnings. The misuse of status or power was highlighted in accompanying readers and course materials. As Harling (1984) emphasised, power is legitimised through the ability of the user to develop an understanding amongst others and to seek social approval through a collegiate approach. It is worth mentioning at this point that this period focused equally on the tasks of leadership – the “what to do” aspects – as well as the “how to do” response. In reviewing the LPSH, it appears that the content aspects of the programme are based on similar theoretical principles set out in the latter part of the 1990s.

The LPSH focuses on style rather than task. It is predicated on an assumption that the majority of experienced Headteachers undertaking

the course have a reasonable understanding of what they have to do to lead and manage the school. Coming now at a point where many of the new LPSH participants will have completed NPQH, this can be regarded as a sensible move because many of the task-learning aspects will have been covered in NPQH. The LPSH attempts to focus on the more interactive and intuitive features of school leadership as a means of creating the greatest impact by leaders on standards in their schools.

Particularly in primary schools, there was an emphasis on team or collegiate approaches in which teachers take on expertise in different curriculum areas. They work collaboratively with other staff to plan the whole curriculum as a corporate venture (see Campbell, 1985).

Through the 1980s, the work of the school leader was placed against other factors affecting the work of the classroom teacher. The climate in which the individual teacher works is only partly influenced by the relationship between leader and teacher. Other factors such as those expounded by Campbell (1985) created the conditions in which teachers work. The key, from Campbell's point of view, is the conditions in which teachers work rather than the relationships amongst teachers and between teacher and school leader. Leadership style is focused not just on the way that the tasks are completed but on the manner in which others are engaged in the decision-making process. It does then force the Head to consider the impact of their work on their followers as well as the levels of delegated or distributed leadership that they offer to others in the organisation.

The Impact of Followers on Leaders

Owens (1987) stated that "*success in leadership refers to the way in which followers behave*". Followership is concerned with how well others have ownership of the culture, the goals and the change process.

These ideas are about how people come to accept them internally rather than about how they are set out in a directed manner. Grint (2005) suggests that we need “*responsible followers*” and that we need to “*encourage constructive dissent, rather than destructive consent*”. In essence, he is promoting a sense of ownership of the goals of the organisation – a more collegiate than coercive approach. He, along with Owens (1987), emphasises the need for greater consideration of collective ownership which is better achieved through some leadership styles compared with others. Coercive or power strategies are less concerned with ownership and followership than democratic, authoritative and collegial perspectives. The best models are where “*organisational goals are ideals held in the human mind rather than the property of an abstraction – the organisation itself*” (Greenfield, 1989, p.85), highlighting the important role of leaders sharing goals with other stakeholders in the school. Campbell (1985) highlights a similar process whereby the vision for the organisation is developed collectively. There is a view that we have to make sure that leaders work in partnership with their staff in order to secure development of the school because “*where there is no consensus in the institution on the wisdom of change, there is no ownership of the policies*” (Stubbs, 1988). Essentially, leadership must induce a strong following if improvement in outcomes is to be achieved.

Alongside followership has to be the ability of the leader to know the team that they are heading up. This is linked to the need to understand the level of capability of their followers or, as Hersey and Blanchard (1988a) suggested, it should be linked to the level of maturity of the staff and is summarised by Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (2000):

“...leadership behaviour should be varied according to the maturity of subordinates or followers. The situation in this theory is thus defined by maturity with two dimensions proposed: professional maturity and psychological maturity....

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, (2000, p.27)

The context of the school and the staff provides a situation that requires a leadership response. When that context changes through internal or external factors, the leadership strategy has to respond in a different way to reflect the changing situation.

Whilst this *“theory has not been subjected to rigorous validation”* (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 2000, p.27), it is agreed that *“its propositions are intuitively well received and have become the focus of widely used management training programmes”* (p.27). Beare et al suggest that:

“The capacity carefully to diagnose maturity levels of staff and then to select matching leadership behaviour according to these propositions would appear to be a worthwhile addition to the repertoire of the school leader.”

(Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 2000, p.27)

This is a very clear statement of contingency theory, recognising that the contextual work of the leader is a fundamental aspect for influencing leadership success in terms of outcomes. It appears an obvious deduction that followership can only be maintained if leadership responds to the needs of others. Power alone cannot achieve this goal and effective leaders mix this with influence and motivation.

Beare et al (2000) recognise the important interdependence of influence and power, mixed with a subtle blend of knowledge about the motivation of people through the relationships they have with the school leader. They accept that the unequal balance of power between the leader and the subordinate is a vital characteristic of effective schooling if the leader is to be in a position to influence subordinates to undertake tasks that meet the leader's vision for the school. Whilst the leader is able to use this imbalance of power to hold the strategic advantage, so the subordinate must accept the weight of power if followership is to be effective. This is echoed in the LPSH model where it is expected that the leader will shape the vision for the school and then persuade, coerce or otherwise obtain the support of the staff in achieving that vision.

The Leadership Construct

Meindl (1992) promotes the argument that the emergence of leadership is heavily dependent on the followers. In his view, leadership emerges as a state of mind within the follower, or an experience that she or he undergoes. It is not necessarily a clear, rational process but a set of perceptions and unspoken understandings that formulate the relationship between leaders and led. Without the experience of being led, followers would not exist and leaders would not emerge (Shackleton, 1995). Leaders are only important in so far as they become the targets of followers' thought systems. According to this approach, the concept of leadership emerges as a way of thinking among group members and about their relationships to one another as they go about their daily work.

It can be argued by those in the school system that school organisations are not the same constructs as others in non-educational settings although it is possible to locate similar arguments in other public and private sector . The best teachers obtain high standards for students because their classroom skills and leadership of learning encourage

their students to do their best work. One way that students achieve beyond expectations is because they wish to please their teacher as a direct result of the relationship that those teachers develop with their students. These students do their best homework because they want to show their teacher what good work they did for them. This is a strong motivation and is arguably stronger than wanting to do an assignment for one's own self-satisfaction. It is not unreasonable, then, that we can expect a similar response from teachers in that they may want their best performance to please the Head.

Staff may follow their leaders because of their belief in the leader as an authority on the knowledge of school organisation and pedagogic practice or simply through their charisma. Crawford (2003, p.81) highlights this aspect in her research on schools in challenging circumstances claiming that they have *"paid considerable attention to the idea of charisma and its role in the creation of 'leadership' as a crucial factor in school success"* (Crawford, 2003, p.81). Staff "need to have someone to lean on" (Crawford 2003, p.82) and as such, a figurehead with charisma and drive to take the school forward is demanded by staff. Yet, as Crawford then points out, there is a danger that this can lead to a dependency culture that is not sustainable over a longer period of time. Drucker (1998) goes further to argue that the test of an effective leader:

"is not what he or she accomplishes. It is what happens when they leave the school. It is the succession that is the test. If the enterprise collapses the moment these wonderful, charismatic leaders leave, that is not leadership. That is – very bluntly – deception"

(Drucker, 1998, p24).

Charismatic leaders can be in danger of establishing a dependency culture within the school even though it may, in the short-term, achieve improvements. The difficulty is twofold. Firstly, it requires a specific leadership style to encourage this 'performing for the Head' behaviour. Secondly, if this style of leadership predominates, when there is a change of leader, the continuity is lost and the followers are left in a state of confusion. Sustainability of a pattern of improvement cannot be guaranteed if succession planning is not built into the departure of Heads who rely too heavily on charisma as a motivational tool.

Relational Leadership

This thinking leads naturally to relational leadership theories. This is usefully explained by Cardona (2000) who makes a useful summary of the link between leader and follower as one that requires a balance of gain by both parties. He bases his work on the relational leadership between the leader and subordinates as opposed to leadership behaviour or leadership style. This sets out a different theoretical perspective on how leadership has hitherto been conceptualised and builds on the work of Bass (1990) and Bass and Avolio (1994).

In setting out the concept of relational leadership, he highlights the characteristics of economic and social exchange relationships and identifies three types of relational leadership, each of which reflects the balance of power and the exchange relationship between the different interested parties, namely the leader and the collaborators.

Transactional and transformational leadership fit into the current programme of the LPSH and other NCSL programmes, with the emphasis placed on transformational leadership. With transactional leadership, leaders provide tangible rewards for the achievement of

subordinates. Staff are told what to do, and they follow the instructions and direction of the designated leader. They are given full responsibility for taking appropriate action to carry out their task and achieve their goal. Failure is placed firmly in the hands of the person to whom the task has been delegated. With transformational leadership, leaders have to inspire their staff to undertake the work based on a vision for the future of the organisation. The focus is on the motivation of followers, working together to achieve the desired goals (see Bass and Avolio, 1994).

There is a third category, the transcendental, which recognises that the:

“leader, as well as looking at the results and in aligning the motivations of his or her collaborators with those of the organisation, also tries to develop the transcendent motivation of these people.... Transcendental leaders are not so concerned about the collaborators’ buying-in their vision, as they are to reach-out to their collaborators’ needs and development.”

(Cardona, 2000, p.5)

Cardona suggests here that the leader attempts to gain a greater understanding of the needs of others in terms of their aspirations and expectations. Such leaders are not merely concerned with transmitting their message to others and convincing their followers, or ‘collaborators’, and are interested in developing them as a transformational process of holistic learning. This work contrasts with the principles on which the LPSH and the work of the NCSL has been established. Cardona (2000) takes the concept of relational leadership to a stage beyond the transformational to a transcendental level. Such developments challenge the principles underlying the training programme for the LPSH and question the contemporary relevance of any training programme

that does not keep up to date with all aspects of our theoretical understanding of leadership development.

The right to lead is often voluntarily conferred during a process of election or, less formally, by members of a group accepting the lead from a colleague. Also, it is not uncommon within organisations to find instances where the real leader within a group is someone other than the nominal leader, someone lower down in the hierarchy. The leader may not be the person with the title or pay scale but the person who has the influencing skills to take others in the direction that they want to go. Where this is the case, the real leader may, or may not, influence members of the group to achieve officially approved goals within the organisation. The whole notion of delegated decision-making places a strain on the power balance within the organisation and gives the Head the opportunity to release some of the work to others. Effective leadership must recognise that there is a fine balance between letting go and not losing control. Cohen (1993) highlighted this important factor in leadership, noting that the best organisations encouraged different people to lead on different aspects of the organisation's work:

'Flexible organisations place decision-making authority in the hands of those close to sources of information and those who have the expertise to interpret and act on it. This is rarely an individual task, because changing technologies and markets have different impacts on organisational functions and disciplines.'

(Cohen, 1993, p.195)

Distributed Leadership

The task for the leader is not simply one of assigning tasks to different staff, taking into account their skills and expertise. It is also about making sure that some tasks are delegated to others with full powers

being devolved to allow the member of staff to make decisions and take action. Whenever this takes place, the leader has to find ways, overtly or covertly, to maintain a level of control without appearing to control the member of staff. The balance between informal leadership and distributed leadership is a fine one and is easily blurred. It is vital from a political theory perspective (see Ball, 1987) that the balance of power and the way that this is manifest in daily activities maintains the outward view that staff are empowered whilst allowing the leader to retain control, or at least feel as though control is being retained. The power-play between the delegator and the delegated has strong political overtones (see Bush, 2003) and is not fully explained in the LPSH model. This highlights a weakness or, at least, a reluctance to accept the reality of the political or Machiavellian motives that drive some staff who yearn for power and control but lack the positional power to guarantee their influence.

As an extension of delegating leading functions to others, distributed leadership pushes the control boundary significantly further, in favour of middle and lower tier staff within the school hierarchy. Distributed leadership recognises that decision-making and vision building does not always have to be generated “top-down”. It can be a legitimate activity of any member of the organisation. However, as noted above (see page 37), too little recognition is given to the negative impact that this could have if staff were to overstep the boundaries. The NCSL has promoted distributed leadership to encourage teachers to become more involved in decision-making, innovation and school improvement. It could be argued that the support for distributed leadership is a recognition that the role of School Leader has become too large for one person to achieve:

“The recent interest and advocacy of distributed leadership ... is in one sense a pragmatic response to the impossibility of individualistic, or heroic, leadership”

(Macbeath and Oduro, 2006, p. 25)

Gronn (2003) builds on his stages of school leadership (see Gronn, 1999) and focuses his energies on debating the merits and practices of design, distribution and disengagement of leadership in school. The work that he has undertaken in distributed leadership develops the concept of the Headteacher as just one person in the organisation taking a leading role. He recognises the emotional leadership activities that help build teams to promote improvement and also recognises the evolving nature of leadership as a group activity, as much reliant on the hero leader as those who follow. He recognises the move away from the super-head to a more distributed style of leadership across the school in which there is acceptance of *“the interdependence between leader-managers and their colleagues, rather than the dominance of the former over the latter”* (Gronn, 2003, p.155). Furthermore, as he develops his three stages of leadership career development, he claims that the *“credibility of the recently endorsed heroic leadership ... begins to look suspect”* (Gronn, 2003, p 49). He argues that researchers are finding that the original theories of hero leadership are being challenged by a new style of school leadership that is more collaborative and pluralistic. Prior notions of a linear link between leader and follower are more complex as distributed leadership flourishes in the workplace. This is a challenge to the *“binary division of leadership behaviour”* (Gronn, 2003, p.48).

Leadership Traits

As was demonstrated in the summary of the work of Bush (2003), there are many competing theories and models of leadership (see page 32).

Ancona (2003) asserts that it is possible to understand leadership by comparing effective leaders with ineffective leaders in terms of their characteristics. The work of the Hay group in identifying its base of effective school leadership is built on this idea. The theory of leadership traits is based on the assumption that leaders possess distinguishing characteristics such as courage, intelligence, and strength of character or a vision that sets them apart from other people. This leads to a view of the charismatic leader, rallying the troops before launching into combat.

Conger and Kanungo (1987) in their paper on empowerment recognised that people need to be motivated and have their self belief enhanced if they are to feel confident to do the things that they have the skills to achieve. This was emphasised later by Conger (2004). Conger outlines different aspects of charismatic leadership but notes that whilst there is a performance role for the leader, there are similar roles for the followers, linking the thinking back to transcendental leadership as expounded by Cardona (2000, see pages 44). Whilst there is a drive away from a charismatic style of leadership and charisma as a leadership trait, there is clearly a place for this attribute within the range of leadership skills that could be used by school leaders within the given context of the situation in which they find themselves. This is not to say that charismatic leaders win every time in every situation but that to ignore the influence of this trait is to renounce an important motivational, empowering force in school leadership. The difficulty with the LPSH is that there appears to be a trend away from any form of dynamic or charismatic leadership in favour of planned, deliberate and contextually managed leadership. Without traits of this type of motivational force, there is a danger that the influencing power of the leader is subsumed by the overwhelming desire to accept the influence of the followers. Thus, new avenues in leadership are closed and consequent advances

in the development of the institution are reduced as the emphasis on planned and managed situational leadership takes too strong a hold. In all categories of leadership, in all leadership styles there must be an element of risk-taking that extends beyond the politically managed leadership styles promoted by the LPSH programme. It could be that by down-playing charismatic leadership, the LPSH is shifting school leadership into a managed function where these new leaders become more concerned about doing things right rather than doing the right things (see Bennis and Nanus, 1985, page 28 above). Those leaders who have a tendency to use charisma to motivate staff in the achievement of the school vision may also be able to manage and organise the school in a structured and planned manner.

Traits and school effectiveness

House and Baetz (1979) argue for a differentiated approach to trait research. They support the view that the need for power and the need for achievement are important leadership traits. House (1977) in his version of contingency theory, points out that traits are not fixed within the distinct personality of the leader but are used within the context of any given situation. He claims that:

“traits are predictive of an individual's characteristic behaviour in select situations, rather than across all situations. Thus, an individual who is disposed toward aggressiveness, as indicated by some psychometric measure, is more likely to behave in an aggressive manner only in aggression-arousing situations.”

(House 1977, p.1)

Bass (1990) draws similar conclusions regarding the need for a differentiated approach whilst, at the same time, claiming that certain fixed personal characteristics seem to characterise leadership behaviour.

The work of Bass highlights the fact that the majority of studies on leadership fail to recognise the relationships within their specific contexts and that whilst trait theory can identify features of leaders, setting those features within an organisational setting can distort the balance of those traits as seen by those being led.

Whilst there are limitations to trait theory, it is useful as a method of identifying the key characteristics of effective school leaders. The LPSH links well to this, recognising the logic of assessing effective leaders against a set of key traits in order then to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of candidates. Linked to this is the acceptance of a set of leadership styles or approaches that are used by leaders in different situations, depending on the context of the school, the task in hand and the skills, abilities and maturity of the staff. Nevertheless, as stated above, if the LPSH fails to give due recognition to some of the traits of effective leaders, of which charisma is a key element, then the LPSH is doing its participants an injustice and needs to adapt its stance if it is to be a truly effective programme of leadership development in schools.

Leadership styles

Some research in leadership has focused on what leaders “do”, rather than what they “are”. This highlights the styles of leadership and the behaviour shown by government-recognised examples of ‘effective’ leaders. The trait approach is concerned with identifying relatively stable attributes of leaders with the implication that leaders can be identified and selected in terms of these attributes. The style approach is more concerned with describing leadership behaviour in different contexts and with different people. The underlying implication of the style approach and leadership trait theory is that leadership behaviour can be taught and that emerging leaders can be moulded in a particular way of leading. Whilst there is no clear picture within the LPSH of what

an effective leader looks like, or indeed if there is one view of an effective leader at all, the general principle is that people can learn to be effective in leadership roles. This is an important point when considering the impact of leadership training on leadership capability. Without acceptance of this principle, there can be no measurable impact of the LPSH. To deny that leadership can be, to some extent, learned and improved upon, would result in no leadership training programmes and reliance upon innate leadership as a personality attribute.

The LPSH course emphasises the importance of keeping people on board with decisions rather than dictating to them. Some of the earliest studies of leadership behaviour sought answers to the question of whether a democratic style of leadership is more effective than an authoritarian or a laissez-faire style (see Lewin et al, 1939). McKenna (2000) questions the validity of the study by Lewin et al (1939), claiming that it was culturally biased and displayed important limitations when applied to the field of industrial leadership. In other cultural settings different results were achieved during replicated studies. For example, in Japan the democratic style was found to be more effective when the task was easy and the autocratic style was more effective when the task was difficult. In India the autocratic style was found to be more acceptable (Smith and Peterson, 1988, Smith et al, 1989).

Fleishman et al (1955) investigated leadership behaviour using a group of military leaders conducted through Ohio State University, USA. Fleishman was trying to move the debate on leadership away from trait theory into a new area of behaviour styles linked to transactional processes in organisational effectiveness. When analysing the behaviour of their leadership, they found that it was possible to account for most of the variation in respondents' evaluations of their leaders through two clusters of action that they called "*consideration*" and

“initiating structures”. Two further dimensions, production emphasis and sensitivity were found to be less influential. Kaiser et al (2007) recognise the significance of this bi-lateral approach to leadership effectiveness as a development on trait theory. They describe it as a *“higher order construct, because the unit of analysis is the simultaneous consideration of standing on two opposing dimensions”* (Kaiser et. al., 2007, p.43). Although they have been given different names at different times, these two clusters or dimensions have been found to describe leader behaviour in subsequent studies involving different work situations (Korman, 1966; Kerr and Schriesheim, 1974). In terms of the LPSH, these dimensions can be attributed to the types of leadership styles used throughout the programme. The affiliative and democratic styles incorporate high levels of *“sensitivity”* and *“consideration”*. The coercive style is more concerned with driving output measures and links closely with the *“production emphasis”* dimension. The pace setting style links well to attributes associated with *“initiating structures”*. This leaves the coaching and authoritative styles that do not fit neatly into these four dimensions but, rather, cut across all of them to some extent in that, in order to engage in high production levels, new structures can be developed collegially and enacted through a coaching model to ensure a sensitive and considerate approach. It is interesting then to note that these two styles come across in the training materials and presentations to be the most favoured of all of the styles presented. It is as if the LPSH programme recognises that the leadership behaviours do not work on a simple bi-lateral plane but that the leadership styles encompass behaviours that are less defined and cross over the two dimensional into a multi-dimensional leadership terrain.

One important finding from the Ohio State University study is that the two dimensions are independent of one another (Fleishman & Harris, 1962). By implication, therefore, a leader may possess a high or a low

predisposition towards each dimension and, as a consequence, the two dimensions are non-relational. The combination of the two dimensions for an individual suggests that several different types of leader can be identified, reflecting the degree to which the leader's behaviour towards followers is characterised by mutual trust, development of good relations, sensitivity towards the feelings of group members and openness to their suggestions. For example, a leader can be directive in managing subordinates and at the same time can establish highly supportive relations with them (Weissenberg & Kavanagh, 1972).

At the time of the Ohio studies, researchers at the University of Michigan were independently investigating the differences between leaders that they had defined as 'effective' and 'ineffective'. The results of this research suggested that their effective leaders were employee-centred (concerned about their subordinates) whereas those that they categorised as ineffective were job-centred (only concerned with the task). Both studies identify key aspects of leadership style in broadly the same way – people concerns and task concerns. Crucially, though, the two types of behaviour identified in the Michigan studies were presumed to be at the opposite ends of a single dimension, implying that a leader either shows job-centred or employee-centred behaviour, but not both.

How the leader balances and responds to the demands of employees and the drive towards task completion remains a focal point for effective leadership in schools. It may be the case that too much emphasis in either direction could result in weak leadership. Certainly, the LPSH model seeks a consensus and balance of leadership styles rather than the over-use of some of the more forceful and assertive approaches that predominated military leadership strategies in earlier centuries.

Blake and Moulton (1964) set out the idea of a bi-polar perspective through the presentation of the Managerial Grid. On one axis, there is a concern for people whilst on the other, a concern for production. This was later developed by Blake and McCanse (1991) who identify five major leadership styles to reflect various combinations of these two planes. The ideal of the management grid is to move towards the 9.9 style (team management) where there is an integrative concern for both production and people (see Figure 3.2). Blake and Mouton (1964) advocate a phased leadership training programme focusing on the ideal style of team management (9.9 style in Figure 3.2). This demonstrates the tendency towards a balance between these two leadership and management functions to achieve team working, distributed leadership and open management.

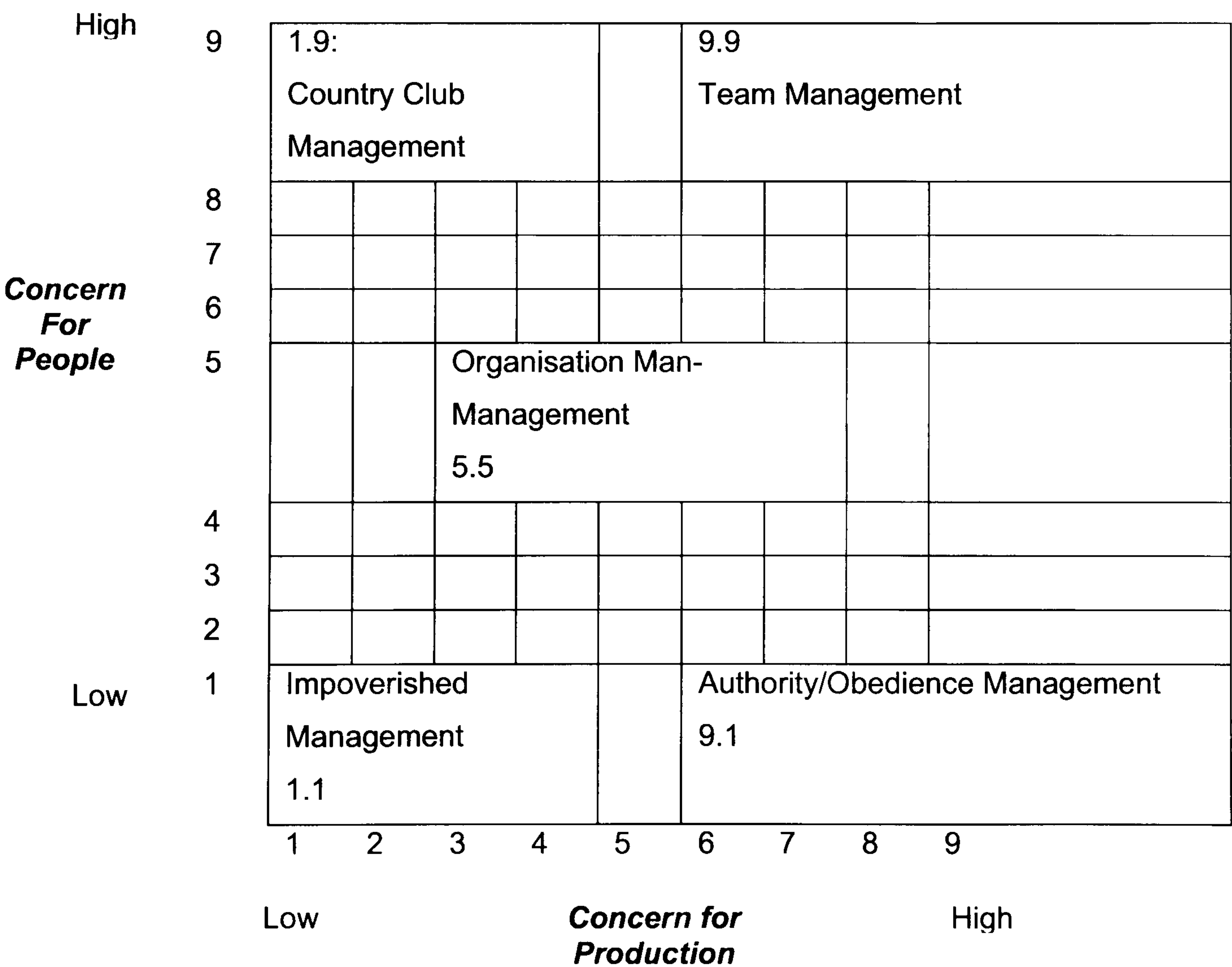


Figure 2.3: The Managerial Grid

Source: Blake and McCanse (1991)

Terry Creissen: EdD 2008

The Managerial Grid identifies the people and task difference and tries to plot these on a two-dimensional model (Figure 2.3).

Shackleton (1995) points out that in common with other style approaches where it is claimed a particular behaviour pattern is appropriate in all situations, the management grid fails to account for the many complexities of individual behaviour in different organisational settings, at different times and with different people. Once more, this draws us towards contingency theory.

Taking these different perspectives together, it is possible to deduce that the most effective leader combines concern for people with concern for task in a balanced manner appropriate to the contextual and situational needs appertaining at the time.

Following in a similar vein, Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) proposed a continuum-based model. At one end of the continuum the leader instructs subordinates (task oriented), and at the other end the leader joins with subordinates in making a decision (relationships orientated). Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) describe the continuum as seven different types of behaviour that a leader could choose to adopt, while recognising that there are shades of participation along the whole scale (see figure 2.4). In LPSH terms, it is possible to add the relevant style descriptions along a similar lineal trajectory with “coercive” at one end and “affiliative” at the other. The definitions do not directly match the Tannenbaum and Schmidt descriptions but the reader will be able to see how they might fit into a similar model as a continuum.

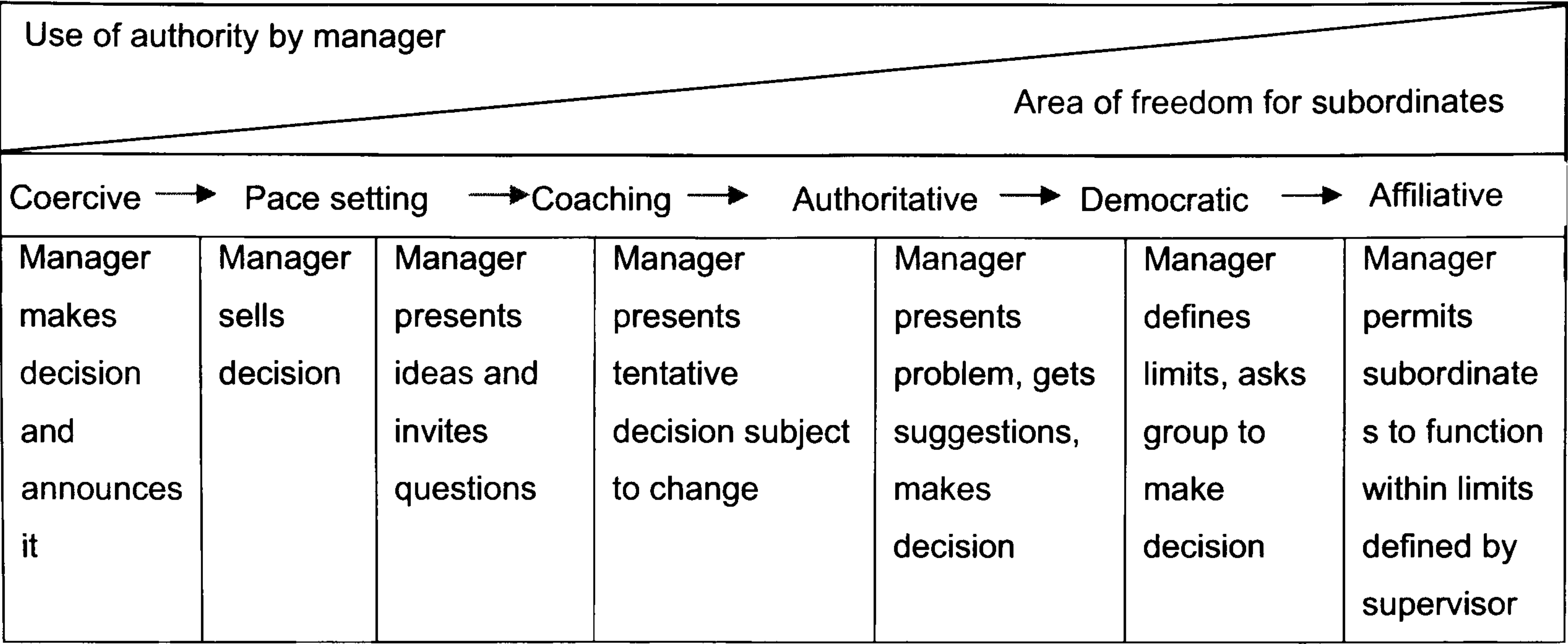


Figure 2.4: Leadership Style Continuum: Degrees of Participation
Adapted from Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958)

Tannenbaum and Schmidt’s ‘degrees of participation’ model was used by Sadler (1970) during an investigation to discover which style employees in a large computer company perceived their manager to exhibit, and whether the perceived style was related to subordinate attitudes. The results showed that most of the employees could describe their immediate superior in terms of the styles identified in the model. When asked which style they would prefer their superior to use, compared with the one they perceived them predominantly using, the results were very different from each other. The preferred style came out as consultative for all grades of staff, particularly for higher grades yet, the closely related democratic style was found to be the least preferred by most groups. Shackleton (1995) deduces from the results of this study that employees typically want to be consulted about decisions but do not want overall responsibility for making the final decision.

Related to this, Muczyk and Reimann (1987) argue that there are two dimensions to staff involvement in decision making processes. One concerns the extent to which leaders allow subordinates to get involved in decision-making - the autocratic-democratic dimension. The other is concerned with the extent to which leaders tell subordinates how to do their jobs and direct their activities - the permissive-directive dimension. Assuming that these dimensions are separate and independent of each other, we can describe four types of leadership behaviour along a linear continuum:

<i>directive</i>	<i>permissive</i>	<i>directive</i>	<i>permissive</i>
<i>permissive</i>	<i>autocratic</i>	<i>democratic</i>	<i>democratic</i>

Figure 2.5: Leadership Behaviour Continuum

On the one hand, using a directive permissive behaviour, staff are simply the servants to the leaders, being told what, how and when to do tasks in order to meet objectives. In the LPSH model, this is similar in many ways to the coercive style of leadership. On the other, using a permissive democratic behaviour, staff are permitted and encouraged to make their own decisions about how and when to undertake tasks to achieve their goals. This is more akin to the authoritative model as set out in the LPSH programme.

From Muczyk and Reimann’s work, it might be assumed that greater success can be achieved through the permissive democratic behaviour of the leader. Yet, according to Vecchio (1987), studies of the costs and benefits of participative versus directive leadership have proved inconclusive. In one study, the proposition that participation has the potential to affect performance was not supported by the results of a comprehensive review by Locke and Schweiger (1979). Wagner (1997) concludes that overall participation has a small positive effect on the

productivity and job satisfaction of group members. Shackleton (1995), as mentioned above, argues that it depends on the individual and the context.

Bryman (1992), Andriessen & Drenth (1998, p 322) and Shackleton (1995, pp 19-21), provide useful reviews of the various criticisms of categorising leadership into a set of “styles”. Concerns regarding the way particular methodologies are widely used during leadership investigations, and a resulting failure adequately to explain assumed causal relationships between leader behaviour and outcomes are central features of these criticisms. It is a common assumption that the chosen style causes a range of outcomes on individual and collective performance, satisfaction and morale. Yet, according to Andriessen & Drenth (1998), most studies in this field involve the use of methods of research which often make it difficult to identify causal relationships. Part of the problem has rested with the prevalence of a simplistic approach to leadership descriptions on a lateral continuum where two variants are diametrically opposed. On the one hand, we might have the autocratic leader whilst at the other end of the spectrum, we find the democratic leader. Neither ends are preferred but some middle ground is expected. Similar bi-lateral continuums have been outlined earlier from Fleishman’s “*consideration*” and “*initiating structures*” (1955); Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) and Blake and Moulton (1964).

Shackleton (1995) believes that we must undertake longitudinal studies in order to understand leadership styles and their impact. In particular, he also criticises the way investigations tend to ignore the issue of informal leadership. He argues that, in organisational life, employees often take a lead from, or are influenced by, people who have no formal leadership recognition. Leadership is accepted from such people because of their technical knowledge and expertise, or because of their

personality. As leadership is about influence, important aspects of leadership tend to be overlooked or ignored in studies where the focus is only on the role of the formal leader. This is important in the context of the LPSH which is designed to develop the formal leader of the school and does not attribute training time to the potentially contradictory factors impinging on leader effectiveness through the informal leadership of others within the organisation.

Situational Theory

Drawing on the main findings of the Ohio State and Michigan studies, situational leadership theory takes as its starting point the notion that there are two dimensions of leadership behaviour: relationship behaviour and task behaviour (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988b).

Relationship behaviour is described in terms of the amount of support, recognition and personal encouragement the leader extends to subordinates. Task behaviour is the amount of direction and structure the leader provides. Accepting earlier findings suggesting that the two dimensions are independent of one another (see Fleishman & Harris, 1962), Hersey and Blanchard (1988a) identify four leadership styles (structuring, coaching, encouraging and delegating) which they present in the form of a matrix, as shown in figure 3.5.

The model places particular emphasis on matching a style of leadership to the maturity of subordinates. This relationship is crucial in the determination of leadership effectiveness (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988a). Maturity is considered in the context of a particular task, and consists of two parts – job maturity and psychological maturity. Job maturity relates to technical knowledge and task-relevant skills. Psychological maturity relates to feelings of self-confidence and ability, and people's willingness to take responsibility for directing their own behaviour.

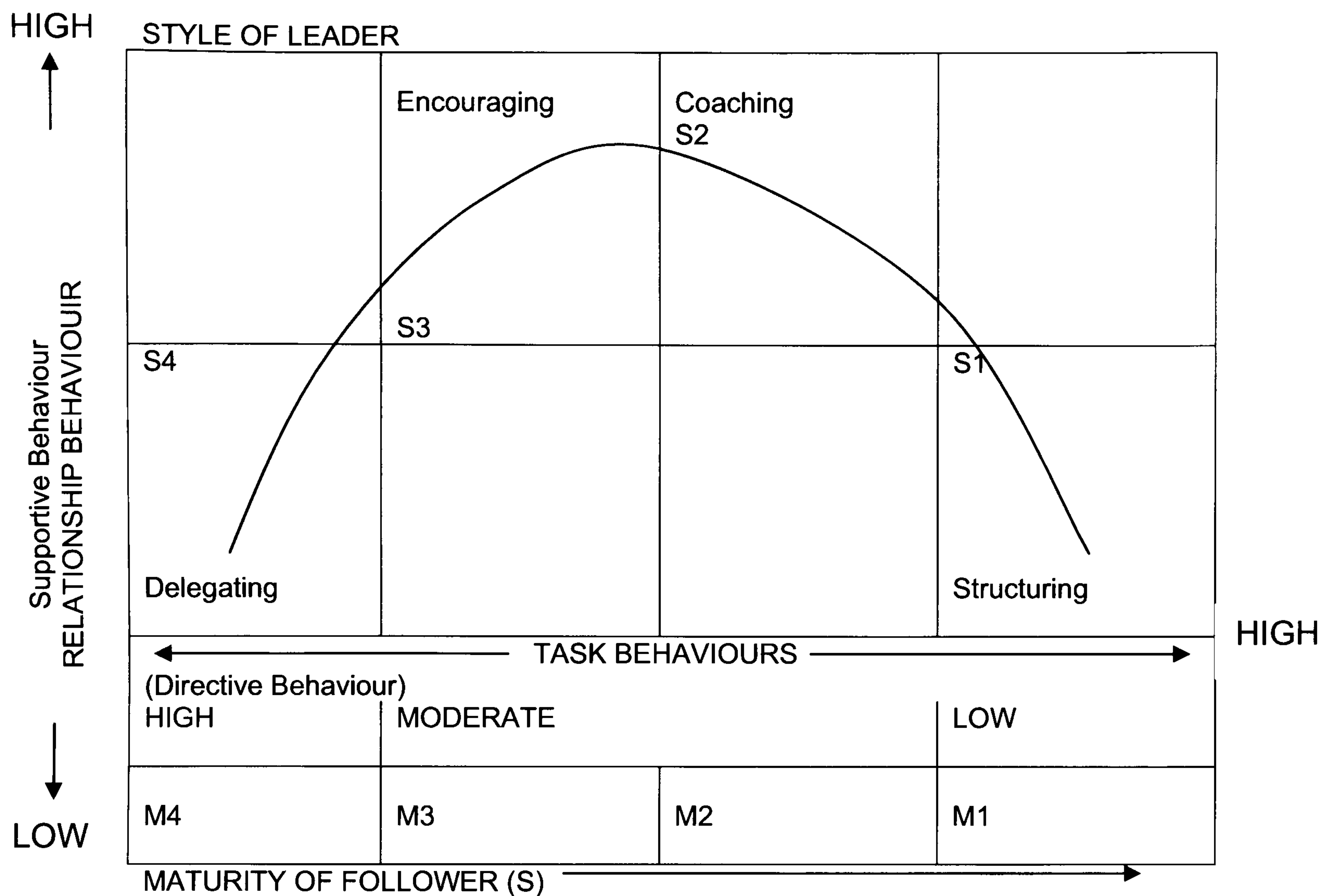


Figure 2.6: Situational Leadership

Source: Hersey and Blanchard (1988a)

The Hersey and Blanchard model has proved popular among practising managers and is used widely in training programmes essentially because it holds credibility for practitioners rather than empirical evidence to support the claims being made about the model. The model follows accepted practice rather than trying to fit practice to theory. There is limited reported research testing the theory and so there is little empirical evidence to support the model's assumptions although a study by Vecchio (1987 and 1995) provides some defence for the model. Utilising a similar strategy to that employed by the LPSH, questionnaires were used to gather information about High School teachers' perceptions of their Head's behaviour, producing some interesting results. The predictions within Hersey and Blanchard's model appeared

most accurate for subordinates with low maturity. They were reasonably accurate for those with moderate maturity, but were considered not very accurate for subordinates with high maturity. Commenting on Vecchio's study, Shackleton (1995) suggests a crucial finding is that in the case of mature subordinates, it is still appropriate to use relationship and task behaviour as a way of ensuring there is no loss of satisfaction or a reduction in performance among subordinates. This has implications for the selection of participants involved in the 360° appraisal used by the LPSH. If the range of respondents chosen had a high level of maturity, then the findings may not be as accurate and would add a higher degree of uncertainty in the feedback provided for the Head. The LPSH, in allowing Heads to choose their 360° appraisers does not take this work into account and could, therefore, be proving false assumptions for the LPSH participants.

According to Shackleton, categorising leadership into different styles pays insufficient attention to the situational variables which may moderate the relationship between behaviour and outcome (Shackleton, 1995). Possible situational variables include subordinate experience, motivation, knowledge and technical expertise of people in the organisation; the size, type and technology of the organisation; the nature of the work; organisational culture; and, environmental factors. There was no attempt to include situational variables in the Ohio State research. This was demonstrated by Schriesheim and Murphy (1976) who used a version of the Ohio State questionnaire to conduct a study into social service organisations. They discovered that when jobs are stressful, greater initiation of structure appears to improve subordinate performance but reduces performance when jobs are not stressful.

The situation does impact on performance and is dependent upon the context in which people are working and being led. It might be that

leadership cannot be explained solely in terms of behaviours because of this relationship to the culture and context of the school. The features of the task and of the environment in which leadership occurs need to be examined in order to gain a more complete and accurate understanding of leadership. This leads to a consideration of contingency approaches that try to analyse when one type of leadership behaviour is more appropriate than another. This is an important feature of the LPSH training programme and it is, therefore, important to understand the source of this perspective.

Contingency Theory

Contingency approaches consider when one type of leadership behaviour is more appropriate than another. Each approach comprises different theories or models which stress different contextual variables or factors. All the approaches work on the premise that the effectiveness of leadership behaviour depends on the context within which it is placed. These models categorise leadership style in different ways. They all recognise that leaders differ in their behaviour and that leader behaviour can make a difference in team performance. Other similarities among the models include their frequent attempt to predict performance as an index of effectiveness and their expectation that satisfaction will be influenced by various leadership principles.

Fiedler (1967) attempts to predict how style of leadership, leader-member relations, the power vested in the position of leader and the structure of the task combine to determine the leader's ability to secure success. Fiedler states that performance is contingent upon personal characteristics and the degree of control over the situation.

Task structure is the degree to which the job can be clearly specified in terms of rules, job descriptions and policies. When tasks are relatively

structured, there is little ambiguity about how they should be approached. Goals are clear, performance measures are understood, and it is unlikely that there will be multiple solutions or approaches to the problem. With low task structure the opposite is the case. Position power is inherent in the leader's role, demonstrating the power to control the fate of subordinates by offering rewards or imposing sanctions. Vecchio (1987) claims that it is easier to manage in situations where the leader has position power. Finally, leader-member relations reflect the extent to which a leader is accepted and generates positive emotional reactions from subordinates.

Fiedler divides the three variables into high and low, and combines them to represent a range of situations (see figure 2.7). In this model, situations to the left side of this table are said to be highly favourable (situations in which it is easier for the leader to have an impact). Situations to the right side are described as highly unfavourable (situations in which it is more difficult for the leader to impact). Fiedler uses the concept of Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) to identify the person within an organisation with whom the leader has least affinity. It presents the situation as one where the leader has the biggest job to persuade a reluctant member of staff than one who easily and readily accepts the direction given them. Using this model, where there is a high number of people in the organisation with whom the leader does not have an affinity (High LPC), Leader-Member relations are poor. If there is a clear task to be achieved, the position power of the Head will not be a determining factor (see columns 5 & 6). However, in cases where there is low task structure, there are multiple solutions and greater uncertainty about how to achieve success, he claims that strong position power is needed (see column 7). This also has implications for the selection of the 360° appraisers used in LPSH to test Headteacher views against staff views. If the selection is biased towards too many

LPCs, then the feedback will be similarly biased and produce a view where staff are more negative about the leadership capabilities of the Head.

	Most Favourable Situation						Least Favourable Situation	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Leader-Member Relations	Good	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Task Structure	High	High	Low	Low	High	High	Low	Low
Leader Position Power	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak
Preferred leader	Low LPC	Low LPC	Low LPC	High LPC	High LPC	High LPC	High LPC	Low LPC

Figure 2.7: Fiedler's Contingency Model

Adapted from Fiedler (1967)

Fiedler maintains that a person's leadership style, or orientation, is fairly difficult to change and so, where there is a mismatch between the leader's style and the situational conditions, the preferred solution is to modify the situational conditions to bring them into line with the leadership style. Ways of achieving this objective include enhancing relations with subordinates, changing the amount of structure in a task, or obtaining more formal power. The goal is to achieve a more conducive work setting based on one's own, preferred personal leadership style. Where it is not possible to achieve a match, the only available alternative, according to the theory, would be to change the leader. The LPSH programme does not share this view and presents a model close to that proposed by Shackleton (1995) whereby different styles need to be used in different situations.

McKenna (2000, pp 370-371) and Shackleton (1995, pp.30-31) provide useful reviews of Fiedler's contingency theory. According to McKenna (2000), much of the criticism hinges on difficulties experienced when measuring task structure, the problem of using the LPC score to differentiate task and human relations-oriented leadership (Schriesheim et al., 1994), and the absence in many studies of a leader with an average LPC score somewhere between high and low.

In Fiedler's model, leadership style is treated as fixed. Anderson (1990) argues that highly effective leaders are adaptable and display the ability to adjust their leadership style to changing situations. Similarly, House (1971) claims leaders can adopt a number of styles, depending on the circumstances. This is reflected in the LPSH training in which leadership styles are categorised and participants are assessed through questionnaires against their own perceptions of their leadership as well as perceptions of co-workers. However, within the LPSH programme, participants are not asked to categorise their co-workers in terms of preference. Neither are they advised to gather any particular profile of co-workers asked to respond to the 360° feedback questionnaire. Building on Fiedler's work, the LPSH might usefully have suggested that participants chose a range of staff – some supportive and others less so, mirroring the work of Fiedler. This would avoid some candidates obtaining a preferential profile after choosing only supportive staff whilst others who deliberately chose the equivalent of a set of Least Preferred Co-workers might end up with a negatively slanted profile. Furthermore, if the LPSH were to reflect an accurate picture of co-worker views, then account would have to be taken of the number of subordinates within the organisation and then some form of cross sectional sample derived by an external and independent person. Only through this method would we have the opportunity for a more objective view of performance.

In contrast with the Fiedler model, (and more in line with the principles underlying the LPSH), Vroom and Yetton (1973) argue that leadership behaviour is flexible and can be adjusted to suit the situation. Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed a leadership model that deals with selecting a leadership style for making decisions. Drawing on the earlier work of Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) concerning directive versus participative leadership, the Vroom-Yetton model suggests that there are five decision-making styles. These range from *highly autocratic* to *highly participative*. In order of increasing participation, the five styles are listed in Figure 3.7. In order to work through the decision-making process, Vroom and Yetton (1973) identify seven questions, (see figure 2.8), which they argue must be answered to determine the appropriate style. Three of these are concerned with the quality of the decision and four have to do with the acceptance of the decision by subordinates.

Style	Style Description
A1	<i>You decide alone.</i> You make the make the decision, without consulting anyone, relying entirely on your own personal information and knowledge.
A2	<i>You seek information and then make the decision alone.</i> You obtain information from subordinates to arrive at a decision. You may or may not describe the problem to them, but you seek information only, not solutions or suggestions.
C1	<i>You consult with individuals and then decide alone.</i> You share the problem with selected individual subordinates. You gather additional information and seek suggestions about possible solutions to the problem from them. You make the decision.
C2	<i>You consult with your entire group and then decide alone.</i> Using this style, you meet with your subordinates in a group and discuss the possible alternatives. You may use their feelings and opinions as additional input, but you make the final decision.
G	<i>You share the problem with your group and arrive at a group decision.</i> Here you allow your subordinates full participation in the decision making process. You may define the problem for them, provide relevant information and participate in the discussion but you do not use your position as leader to influence them. The group is the decision-maker, and you accept both the decision and the responsibility for it.

Figure 2.8: Leadership decision styles (Vroom and Yetton, 1973)

The rules focus on issues such as whether there is sufficient information to make a good decision and whether subordinates can be trusted to approach the problem from a perspective that is in line with organisational goals. Arranged sequentially, a set of seven questions provides a decision-making pathway (see figure 2.9) for matching a single, preferred leader style to a given situation. For each question, a manager or leader has to provide a yes or a no response. At the end of each branch in the tree is a designated style, denoted by A1, A2, C1, C2 or G (see figure 2.10). The questions can be represented as follows on the continuum of quality of decision and subordinate acceptance:

1	Decision quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is there a quality requirement such that one solution is likely to be better than another?
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Have I sufficient information to make a high quality decision?
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the problem structured?
4	Subordinate Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the acceptance of the decision by subordinates important for effective implementation?
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none">If I were to make the decision myself, am I reasonably certain that my subordinates would accept it?
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do subordinates share the goals to be attained in solving this problem?
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is conflict among subordinates likely in preferred solutions?

Figure 2.9: Key questions when making a decision

In many cases more than one leadership decision style is appropriate (see figure 2.8).

More recently, Vroom and Jago (1988 and 1995) have added five more questions, namely:

- 1. Do subordinates have enough information to make a good decision?
- 2. Is time too short to involve subordinates in decision making?
- 3. Would it be too expensive to bring together geographically dispersed subordinates?
- 4. How important is it to minimise the time it takes to make the decision?
- 5. How important is it to maximise the opportunities for subordinate development?

They also introduced a 5-point scale for most questions rather than a simple Yes or No response, and mathematical formulae so that the optimum style can be found to match the situation. With the assistance of a computer programme, leaders can input their answers and be given a customised score for each decision style. Figure 3.9 sets out the revised model and suggests a possible overlay of the appropriate leadership decision styles set out in figure 3.8.

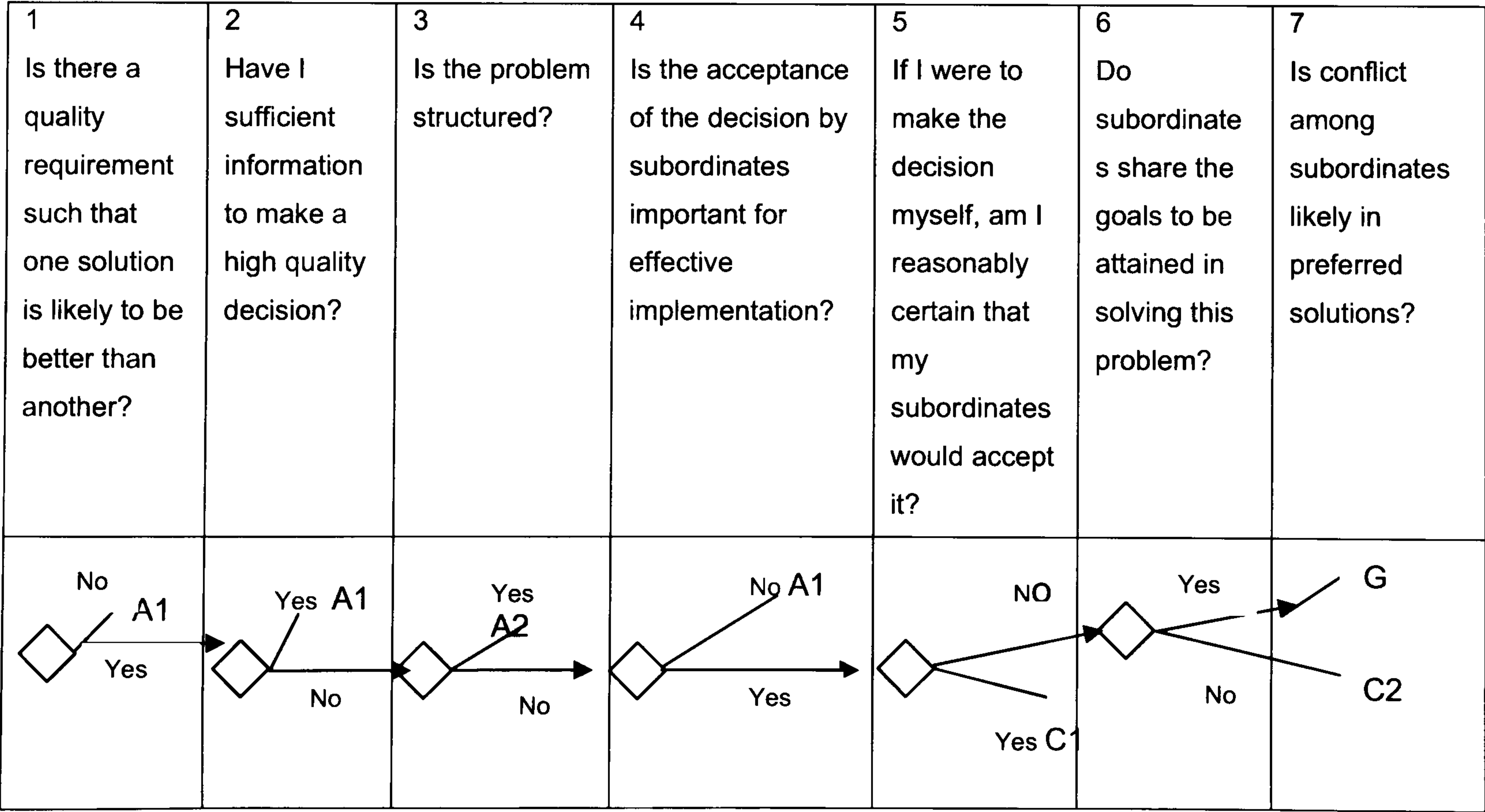


Figure 2.10: Decision tree for group problems

Support for the Vroom and Jago model can be found in a case study conducted by Margerison and Glube (1979) and in a report on some experimental studies conducted by Field (1982). There are, however, criticisms of the Vroom-Yetton model. According to Shackleton (1995), much of the research involves leaders being asked which decision-making methods they chose and to comment on the quality and acceptability of the decision. A particular problem with this approach is that there is an inevitable risk that respondents will give biased feedback. The success or failure of the decision taken by the leader may well affect their judgement about the approach they used when making the decision and their recall about the nature of the situation and the events preceding the decision. Leadership is often judged not on the process but on the outcomes.

There will be a range of influences in the process affecting the final outcome that influence the leaders' decisions and the consequent actions that they take. Predicting how such actions are implemented, understood and conceptualised by other staff is not a simple journey from A to B. There are many subjective re-interpretations of the initial decisions and actions of leaders. Whilst the views of followers is of paramount importance, frequently, in research on leadership styles, there is a reliance on subjective views. Subjective views are open to criticism and interpretation, which makes the research valuable for studies into the range of perspectives held by different people within an organisation, from leader to subordinate. Views of followers have to be set alongside the intentions of leaders. The LPSH does this in its assessment of leadership skills through the 360° questionnaire by matching the views of co-workers with the views of the participant leader. It also professes to avoid making direct judgements, leaving the participants to draw their own conclusions. In reality, participants are led to consider 'best fit' judgements and are guided in their

interpretation by the process of the training programme. Furthermore, the looseness of the selection process for deciding on the participants in the review of the leader make the subjective process even less rigorous and more open to criticism by those who favour objective, hard data in making judgements about people's skills and abilities. There are limitations to this as noted above in that the choice of appraisers can introduce bias into the type of feedback that is produced.

Path-Goal Theory

Another such perspective within the contingency approach is path-goal theory developed by House (1971). This theory asserts that a key purpose of leadership is to enable the subordinate to achieve goals and find the experience satisfying. The theory is concerned with explaining the relationship between the behaviour of the leader and the attitudes and expectations of the subordinate.

The basic premise of path-goal theory is that subordinates will react favourably towards a leader who they perceive will help them achieve goals. The leader will motivate subordinates to work hard once the nature of the task has been clarified, smooth the path to the goal and eliminate obstacles to goal achievement.

According to path-goal theory, there are four types of leader behaviour which can affect subordinate motivation:

- instrumental leadership;
- supportive leadership;
- participative leadership; and,
- achievement-oriented leadership.

Instrumental (directive) leadership involves letting subordinates know what is expected of them and providing specific guidelines, rules,

regulations, standards and schedules of work to be done. In a number of respects, it is similar to the high-structure, low consideration style in the Ohio State University studies. It is similar to the high task, low-people approach in Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (Blake and Mouton, 1964) and the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership model (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988a).

Supportive leaders are concerned about the status, needs and well-being of subordinates. They are friendly and endeavour to make work more pleasant for subordinates. This type of behaviour is similar to the low-structure, high consideration of the Ohio studies or the low-task, high-people approach of the Managerial Grid or Situation Leadership model.

Participative leadership involves consulting with subordinates, seeking their suggestions and being considerate towards them in the decision-making process. It is comparable to the high/high approach of the Ohio studies, or the low-task, high people approach of the Managerial Grid or Situational Leadership model.

The achievement-oriented leader sets challenging goals for subordinates and shows confidence and trust in the way concern is expressed about their ability to meet challenging performance standards. This type of leader is concerned to improve performance.

According to House (1971), all of these four styles can be used by a single leader, depending on the circumstances. Being flexible in this way is said to be one feature of an effective leader (Shackleton, 1995).

Whether different types of leader behaviour cause differences in subordinate satisfaction and performance, or vice-versa, is still

unanswered. Most of the studies testing the theory are cross-sectional, rather than longitudinal, so it is impossible to determine with any reasonable degree of certainty what causes what effect. However, Greene (1979) conducted a longitudinal study showing that leadership behaviour did cause different levels of satisfaction among subordinates. If task structure was low, instrumental leadership led to higher work satisfaction. If task structure was high, supportive leadership led to higher satisfaction. Consequently, it is encouraging to note that developing an understanding of the impact of leader behaviour on others is a feature of the LPSH course. Whether this impacts on participants is one feature of this study.

Leadership Substitution

Kerr and Jermier (1978) have proposed, somewhat controversially, that leader behaviour may sometimes be unnecessary or superfluous because other factors provide support and guidance to subordinates. Such factors might include subordinate ability, training, or expertise. The notion that leaders may not play a crucial role in all settings can help to explain why some work groups achieve good results despite the presence of a poor, formally identified leader.

It is possible to detect early recognition of the concept of leadership substitution in Schriesheim and Kerr's (1977) examination of path-goal theory. In path-goal theory, as in the theory of leadership substitution, it is recognised that there are occasions when environmental variables may reduce or totally eliminate the need for leadership. Kerr and Jermier (1978) have suggested two types of variables to account for cases in which leadership may be redundant or unimportant: leadership substitutes and leadership neutralisers (see Figure 2.11).

Other researchers have also identified so-called enhancers, that is, factors which have the effect of increasing the leader’s impact on subordinates (Howell *et al*, 1986). These are all moderator variables, since they have the effect of moderating the influence of a leader.

Variable		Task-oriented leadership	People-oriented leadership
Organisation variable:	Group cohesiveness	Substitutes for	Substitutes for
	Formalisation	Substitutes for	No effect on
	Inflexibility	Neutralises	No effect on
	Low positional power	Neutralises	Neutralises
	Physical separation	Neutralises	Neutralises
Task characteristics:	Highly structured task	Substitutes for	No effect on
	Automatic feedback	Substitutes for	No effect on
	Intrinsic feedback	Neutralises	Substitutes for
Group characteristics:	Professionalism	Substitutes for	Substitutes for
	Training/Experience	Substitutes for	No effect on
	Low value of reward	Neutralises	Neutralises

Figure 2.11: Substitutes and neutralisers for leadership
Source: Adapted from Shackleton (1995, p 28)

Substitutes for leadership are variables that contribute directly to subordinates’ performance apart from what the leader does. For example, there are circumstances under which self-management, self-regulation or self-supervision can fulfil some of the functions of leadership to encourage and facilitate performance (Manz and Sims, 1980; Mills, 1983; Mills and Posner, 1982). In situations where subordinates have the necessary knowledge, skills, experience and

professional standing, they are likely to be able to perform effectively for much, or all of the time, without the support of a leader (Slocum & Sims, 1980; Howell and Dorfman, 1981; Sheridan et al, 1984). These characteristics may also permit subordinates to establish their own goals, evaluate their own performance, and reward themselves (through self-recognition, for example). In this way, self-management can reduce the need for or substitute for achievement-oriented or pressurising behaviour by a leader (Manz and Sims, 1980). Leadership and organisational practices can also contribute to self-supervision. Lack of centralisation and of support from leaders, in particular, can operate in this way (Mills, 1983; Mills & Posner, 1982).

Organisational and task characteristics also appear to affect the importance of leadership. Group cohesiveness, routine tasks, interesting work, tasks for which it is easy to judge one's own performance and, especially, an established, detailed system of rules governing work activities have all been found to reduce the contribution of leadership to employee performance (Howell and Dorfman, 1981; Sheridan et al, 1984; Slocum and Sims, 1980).

There have been attempts to identify the impact of other factors besides task structure on the power of the leader to influence the led (Abdel-Halim, 1981; Schriesheim and De Nisi, 1981). For example, where leaders and their subordinates are physically separated, the leader's ability to give on-the spot directions to subordinates is greatly reduced. This has the effect of neutralising the influence of the leader in both a task-oriented and people-oriented style of leadership. As mentioned earlier, the processes that link leader and led are vital to the successful implementation of decisions through actions. The greater the contact, the easier and quicker it is for the leader to amend actions in the light of their interpretation by subordinates. Where geographically distanced or,

due to the size of the organisation, the job of the leader to review the actions of subordinates is harder, often the response when things go wrong is slower.

Cause and Effect

Despite the growing popularity of leadership theories and models, there is still no conclusive evidence to support an assumed causal relationship between leader behaviours and organisational effectiveness (Howell et al. 1986). Consequently, there has been a considerable amount of recent debate within the research community about whether there is a need for leadership, the perceived romanticising of leadership, and possible substitutes for leadership (Hayes, 2000; McKenna, 2000).

Meindl (1992) questions the value of research from a traditional super-ordinate against sub-ordinate perspective and argues the case for a radical and controversial approach when researching leadership and its effects. Traditional research is leader-centred. It is mainly concerned with characteristics and analysing what the leader does. This largely ignores the influence of subordinates and working groups within organisational life (Meindl and Ehrlich, 1987).

Attribution Theory

According to Meindl and Ehrlich (1987), theorists and practitioners have tended to attribute organisational success to leaders when in reality other factors, in particular the quality and influence of subordinates and working groups, is what really matters. Attacking what they term '*the romance of leadership*', Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) argue that qualities attributed to the leader by their subordinates and others may not be due to the actions of the leader at all. In their view, leaders are rarely as influential as imagined. There is a natural tendency to explain organisational success by attributing qualities to the leader on the basis

of theories as to what leaders of successful organisations must be like (Meindl et al, 1985; Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987). This “attribution” theory of leadership is based on the belief that people react to similar outputs very differently, depending on the different causal inferences they make regarding those outcomes (Shackleton, 1995).

Heider (1958) used the term ‘attribution’ to describe the process people go through when seeking to explain the causes of the behaviour of others. Attribution theory focuses on the inferences people make when deducing someone else’s disposition or traits, from observations of their behaviour. Essentially the theory asserts that we observe the behaviour of others, and then attribute causes to that behaviour. The central idea behind attribution theory is that the leader’s judgements about his or her subordinate’s actions are influenced by the leader’s attribution of the causes of the employee’s performance (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Podsakoff, 1982; Vecchio & Gobdel, 1984; Crouch & Yetton, 1988). Leaders observe the performance of their subordinates and then try to understand why the subordinates’ behaviour meets, exceeds or fails to match expectations. The importance of the leaders’ causal attributions is emphasised in a survey carried out by Stoeberl and Schneiderjans (1981). They found that 97% of the supervisors surveyed reported having problems disciplining subordinates. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that most of the research in this field of enquiry tends to relate to leaders’ responses to subordinates’ poor performance (Green & Mitchell, 1979, Mitchell & Wood, 1980). In my view, there is not enough recognition given to the impact of the leader in the first place in shaping the performance of other staff. Leaders must take responsibility for their sub-ordinates and recognise the potentially powerful influence they have on subordinate performance.

According to Heider (1958), people perceive behaviour as being caused either by the individual in question (dispositional behaviour), or by the environment (situational behaviour). To illustrate this in conjunction with the attribution process, a leader may react to a subordinate's poor performance in a number of ways. If, on the one hand, leaders attribute a subordinate's poor performance to internal factors (such as lack of ability or lack of effort), they may conclude that the subordinate is in need of training, or a reprimand (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Mitchell & Wood, 1980; Ilgen et al., 1981). If the leaders attribute poor performance to external factors (such as poor working conditions or inappropriate allocation of duties), they are more likely to respond by focusing on the organisation rather than the subordinate. At the core of this is how we question how people decide what type of attribution to make.

Kelley (1967) set out an explanation as to how these judgements about the internal and external causes of people's behaviour were made. According to the principles of his Co-variation Model, if two events repeatedly occur together, we are more likely to infer that they are causally related. In order to determine whether another person's behaviour is attributable to internal or external causes, the model suggests judging actions according to three key situational variables - Consensus, Consistency and Distinctiveness.

Green & Mitchell (1979) provide a useful application of Kelley's co-variation model. In their description of the process, the leader first diagnoses the cause of the employee's ineffective performance and then analyses the subordinate's behaviour with regard to its consistency over time, distinctiveness across settings and consensus across employees. The leader then attributes the poor performance to factors that are either internal or external to the subordinate. In the second

stage of the model, the leader implements a corrective response to improve the performance of the subordinate. Green and Mitchell predict that leaders will select more punitive, corrective actions where poor performance is attributed to factors internal to the subordinate. Wood and Mitchell (1981) noted in their research that some behavioural reactions to attributions may be largely programmed (internal attributions of poor performance lead directly to punishment) whilst other reactions involve further information processing (external attributions of poor performance lead to further situational diagnosis).

The model is not without its critics. Shackleton (1995) asserts that it is frequently suggested that the model over-estimates people's ability to assess co-variation and assumes that people are more logical, rational and systematic than is, in fact, the case. Others highlight the potential for bias in the attribution process and the frequency of errors in attribution (Bernardin and Beatty, 1984).

Subordinates also go through a process of attributing causes to their own behaviour. In cases where leaders and group members arrive at different conclusions, the odds are that conflict will arise (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Mitchell & Wood, 1980; Ilgen et al, 1981). The evidence from these and other studies suggests that leaders are rather inclined to attribute subordinate performance to internal factors, whereas subordinates are strongly inclined to emphasise the importance of external causes (Andriessen & Drenth, (1998).

According to Ilgen et al, (1981), a leader's rating of a subordinate who performs poorly is affected by a number of other factors. When a leader's own rewards are affected by poor subordinate performance, the leader is likely to rate subordinate performance more highly, and to recommend further training. There is also evidence to suggest that if a

subordinate has a poor previous work history, the leader is likely to attribute subordinate poor performance to internal causes (Wood & Mitchell, 1981). The researchers found that if the effects of poor performance are serious or harmful, then internal attributions are even more likely. On the other hand, they found that where subordinates make excuses or apologise for their poor performance, the leader is less likely to make internal attributions. When conducting my research, I had to take account of the way that staff perceive each other and how this is affected by whether they believe the causes are internal or external.

Whether the leader likes or dislikes the subordinate appears to be another important factor. Zajonc (1980) reviewed studies that show that “liking” occurs early in the human interaction and may affect cognitive processes to a significant degree. Dobbins and Russell (1986a) maintain that liking or not liking someone is a variable that could decide the nature of the corrective action. In their laboratory study, Dobbins and Russell found that subordinate likeableness did not affect the leader’s attribution of the cause of poor performance but it did have a bearing on the corrective action taken. When dealing with less liked staff, leaders were more inclined to reprimand and conduct performance counselling and less inclined to offer support. These findings are echoed by Turban et al (1990) who found that a supervisor’s liking for a subordinate positively influences the treatment of the subordinate and also evaluations of the subordinate’s work performance. This aspect of bias has been taken further by Dobbins (1986) who investigated differences between male and female leaders’ responses to poor subordinate performance. Dobbins found that the corrective actions of female leaders were more affected by ‘likeableness’ and the gender of the subordinate than were the corrective actions of male leaders.

Attribution is a two-way process. Subordinates are capable of attributing causes to the behaviour of their leaders, and can view the leader as having an effect on their own performance (Leach, 2002). They also develop either positive or negative attitudes about the leader. When employees are successful, they tend to rate their leader as successful. When they are not, they tend to blame the leader and distance themselves from him or her (Shackleton, 1995; McKenna, 2000). Dobbins and Russell (1986b) found that leaders tend to attribute the causes of poor group performance to subordinates, whilst subordinates attribute the causes of poor group performance to leaders, whatever the real causes may be. When considering the responses of participants in the case study schools, it is essential to be aware that perceptions may be influenced by their attitude towards each other more than the activities on which they are commenting.

Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) claim that people who attribute an organisation's success to the leader's behaviour are inclined to evaluate the success of the organisation more favourably than people who attribute the organisation's success to factors not directly associated with leadership. Taking the argument a stage further, Meindl (1989) suggested that charismatic and transformational leadership amounts to what he calls 'hyper-romanticisation'. In order to test his idea, Meindl asked a cohort of business students to complete Bass and Avolio's (1994) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) in respect of ex-president Ronald Reagan and Lee Iacocca, chief executive of Chrysler Corporation. The students were also asked to complete a Romance Leadership Scale (RLS) which measures the extent to which an individual sees leadership as a highly significant factor in determining organisational outcomes. The results showed that the higher an individual's RLS score, the more likely it was that they would see Reagan and Iacocca as transformational leaders.

In a similar study, Ehrlich et al (1990), employed the MLQ and RLS to obtain the perceptions of subordinates concerning the manager of a successful high technology defence contracting company. The results showed that the manager was attributed with high charisma and individualised consideration. The correlation between the Romance of Leadership Scale was positive (0.32).

Commenting on this study, Shackleton (1995) suggests its real value is not so much the findings of a correlation between charisma and the Romance of Leadership but rather how attributions of charisma are seen to be made. It was found that employees who knew leaders well and had direct dealings with them, were less likely to describe them as charismatic. The finding appears to suggest subordinates with little or no direct contact with leaders are more likely to describe them as being charismatic, when compared to subordinates who have closer and more regular contact with them. If the participants are the ones choosing the people for feedback on the 360° review for the LPSH, then if they understand, and accept, the view of Shackleton, they could use this to manipulate the outcomes of the review. This is another reason why the selection of co-workers to review the leadership qualities of the Head should be undertaken by an independent person.

The arguments of Meindl and others concerning the romanticising of leadership have attracted considerable opposition from other researchers. Bass (1990) has expressed the view that this approach to leadership research goes too far in the opposite direction by relegating leadership to a minor role in organisational affairs. Bass argues that it is clear from military, political and business history that the effects of leadership are real and not, as implied by Meindl, perceptions in the minds of others. Yukl (1989) expresses a similar concern, claiming that Meindl's portrayal of leadership is presented as an unimportant, trivial

feature of organisational life. Bryman (1992) argues that, in the examination of charisma and the romanticising of leadership, Meindl and his colleagues confirm the obvious in that charisma is, and always has been, in the eyes of the follower. Acknowledging that there are some serious criticisms of Meindl's theory, the quality of leadership might not be the only factor involved in ensuring organisational success. The causal link between success and leadership will be difficult to ascertain because it can only be judged through consideration of the views of the leader and the subordinates. It is this link that the LPSH tries to draw together in the 360° review.

Links to School Effectiveness

School effectiveness is defined by Morley and Rassool (1999) as *"the crystallisation and reconfiguration of a range of belief systems, policy interventions and ideologies that have floated through education since at least the 1960s"* (Morley and Rassool, 1999, p.1). It is based on a set of principles in which *"the 3 Rs are best achieved via the 3 Es (economy, efficiency and effectiveness)"* (Morley and Rassool, 1999, p.59).

It is important in this study to focus on the key leadership issues. For this purpose, Morley and Rassool (1999) criticise the somewhat simplistic perception of leadership within the school effectiveness movement:

"Leadership is a controversial concept, often embedded within classic hierarchical thinking and polarised notions of the leaders and the led. However, in school effectiveness it is represented as automatically benign and upbeat. Leaders are represented as uncontested figures 'who purport to restrict themselves to the realms of fact, means and measurable effectiveness' (Wilcox, 1997: 252). The

unproblematic construction of leadership and shared vision in school effectiveness research implies that organisational culture is based on consensus, rather than conflict (Ball, 1987; Morley, 1999). It ignores the micropolitical processes in the school and the way in which power relations and competing interests interact with change programmes.”

(Morley and Rassool, 1999, p.66)

Despite these reservations about the assumptions made by the school effectiveness researcher, there is a great deal of research that has linked effective leadership to effective schools. As Crews and Weakley state:

“when you poke into the inner workings of a successful school, you will find without fail ... a skilful leader who understands how to transform educational practice...”

(Crews and Weakley, 1995 p.5 cited in MacBeath & Oduro, 2006, p.1)

MacBeath (2002) summarises the issue of leadership and school effectiveness:

“The clearest message from school effectiveness research says John Gray (1988), is 'the importance of leadership'. Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1994) concur: 'Almost every single study of school effectiveness research has shown both primary and secondary leadership to be a key factor' (p.78). Scottish HMI put it this way: 'The leadership qualities of Headteachers and the manner in which they fulfil their management responsibilities are key factors in determining the effectiveness of schools' (2000, p. 2). The DFEE White Paper Excellence in Schools, (2001) raises the stakes even further with the claim: 'The quality of the head often makes the difference between success or failure of a school' (p. 8).”

(MacBeath, 2002, p121)

He outlines that, whatever the phase of school and whatever the geographical location of the school, effectiveness is inextricably linked to leadership. Effective leaders make effective schools. Yet we need to recognise that effective leaders work with colleagues to ensure that there is effective leadership at all levels in the organisation.

As early as 1994, Hopkins was highlighting the link between effective schools and leadership by staff other than the Headteacher:

“We believe that research into effective schools provides clear evidence that challenging the traditional order and promoting a more dynamic and decentralised approach to leadership have often been associated with school improvement”

(Hopkins, 1994, p.155)

The NCSL has promoted this idea through the adoption of the business leadership term originally linked to schools by David Hargreaves, namely “distributed leadership”. The concept had been illustrated before by Hoyle. In 1986, he recognised the political machinations that influence decision-making in schools, noting that other staff have skills and knowledge beyond the Headteacher’s capabilities. He pointed out that:

“The Head cannot embody all the professional expertise which a school needs. Hence teachers with specific kinds of expertise ... exercise considerable influence on the decision-making process in the school.”

(Hoyle, 1986, p. 79)

Hoyle’s work focuses on the micropolitical dimension of the Head’s role in decision-making and influencing others. He takes a different perspective to collegiate models supported by Hopkins (2001) and others involved in distributed leadership (e.g. Gronn, 2003) and a style of leadership which is embedded in the LPSH. A more collegiate approach is adopted by the National College in line with the work of writers such as Hopkins (2001) who pointed out that:

“... the leadership function in those schools which are most successful in adopting school improvement values and approaches does not necessarily rest exclusively with the Headteacher or Principal.”

(Hopkins, 2001, p.114)

Harris (2004), on the other hand, adopts an approach similar to Hoyle when investigating the work of Heads in challenging schools. This recognises the importance of the political dimension to leadership and the explicit use of power to achieve the vision for the school (Harris, 2004).

Others have also recognised that leadership is not always the sole responsibility of one person and is seen as a function rather than a role. It is a product of the complex relationships within an organisation (see Ogawa and Bossert, 1997). However, not all teachers are keen to take on the responsibilities that go with a distributed leadership function. This was reported in a study by Myers (2000), in which they encountered some situations where teachers were reluctant to have leadership functions devolved to them (Myers, 2000). Nevertheless, a Headteachers, in order to fulfil the functions of leadership in schools, must acknowledge that they cannot control everything nor can they be responsible for directing all members of the organisation to achieve their goals. Staff have to take on some of these functions as do governors in school settings. This is recognised in the OfSTED School Inspection Framework that grades school leadership and management for all staff as well as separately for the Headteacher and the governors (see Ofsted, 2005).

When examining the LPSH, it is important to recognise the role of followers as well as leaders. With a programme focused on the latter, we have to consider its impact on the whole school as well as the influence it has on the behaviour of the participants. The school development project of the LPSH *“focuses explicitly on the participating head’s development as a leader and the impact of this on school climate in particular”* (Simkins et al, 2007, p.5). It is heralded as the pinnacle of Headteacher development and promotes a view of leadership that could

be criticised for its singularity in fitting Heads into a model of leadership that has a narrow view of effective school leadership.

Training Fit for Purpose

It is interesting to note that in the End to End review of the NCSL (2004b), there is an underlying concern that NCSL is an exclusive organisation that promotes a one size fits all strategy for training. Indeed, one of the College's aims is to "provide a single national focus for school leadership development, research and innovation" (NCSL, 2004b, p.2).

Bush (2004) noted concerns about the narrow focus permeating from the NCSL:

"The government's decision that it (NCSL) should provide a single national focus for school leadership development and research is ambitious, probably not wise and manifestly not true. Leadership and development programmes and opportunities continue to be offered by universities, local education authorities and professional bodies....These groups provide a welcome alternative perspective on school leadership."

(Bush, 2004, p.2)

Paterson (2004), in a report on early headship development, highlights the difference between the theory and practice of leadership development. He argues that information from other researchers demonstrates that there is too much emphasis on content and not enough on process. He sets out the argument that *"leadership development literature is awash with unsubstantiated claims about what leaders should learn, whilst evidence about what works and how it works is scarce"* (Paterson (2004), p.1). He criticises *"prescribed,*

standardised, theoretical courses" (p.3) in favour of support programmes that have an element of mentoring over a sustained period of time.

If the LPSH is a viable and effective training programme for serving Heads, it needs to be inspirational and challenging to take leader-thinking forwards. It will have to stand alongside other programmes and be judged on its merits rather than simply be heralded as a programme that its promoters claim is better than anything else. The course tries to cover an element of content whilst still allowing time to reflect on the ideas and to work on this in practice. It tries to draw together the elements of process and content to make the programme viable and valuable for participants. In many respects, it is not just a content or a process driven course but an amalgam of the two. In order to test the effectiveness of this balance, we need to consider its impact on leaders and staff. This is a challenging task because the impact of any training programme has to be measured by outcomes and perceptions of effectiveness. Measures of impact tend to imply that there must be some positive change processes in the way that people operate. However, a more challenging assessment would look at what participants have retained because the training has highlighted that this is an area of strength. For example, if a leader is being highly effective and has demonstrated high degrees of leadership across the board, there is no need for that person to alter their strategies. If they then return to their school and start making changes because they believe that change is synchronous with improvement, the LPSH has failed to provide the right sort of impact. The programme is trying to influence leaders to reflect on their existing practice. If this is working well, at a high level, then the programme should recognise that no change is the best outcome for that leader. This is not implied in the literature as a possible outcome. Rather, the view that everyone can improve is one that permeates through the LPSH.

Measuring impact is not an exact science and researchers have struggled to find methods to quantify the impact of staff training on students and performance. There is agreement that we need to provide continuing professional development to create growth and improvement for staff. We may be able to evaluate the impact of training programmes in terms of outputs and measures of impact, but we can only realistically assess and identify perceived changes in behaviours and approaches as viewed by others. We cannot determine a direct link to specific improvements in learning. The note of caution here is that impact does not simply correlate with change. Impact is a more discerning process and is a balance of need against change or maintenance of the status quo.

The Impact of Leadership on Performance

Bennett and Smith (2000) drawing on the work of Young (1981) identify three orders of impact from training programmes. The first order would include improvements in the organisation of practical, task-based activities with identifiable outcomes. This might include *“improved paperwork or better staff deployment in a timetabling process, which might result from practising the activity over and over”* (Bennett and Smith, 2000, p.15)

Second order impact involves the introduction of new procedures and activities that would normally involve:

“the acquisition of new knowledge or skills, but may not involve fundamental changes to the understanding one has of the job of the head of department, nor of the tasks involved”

(Bennett and Smith, 2000, p.15).

The final, third order of impact is about the identification of a change in working practice that shifts to a higher level of leadership by the person involved. In the case of Headteachers, their understanding of and use of leadership to take the school forwards to higher levels of achievement, understanding and quality might well come into this arena (see Bennett and Smith, 2000). It is the second and third levels of impact that are the central focus of this study.

In a study by Simkins et al (1997), the focus on three NCSL programmes including LPSH used a case study approach to measure impact, drawing but refining the model espoused by Leithwood and Levin (2005). In this, they identify a number of variables and look at measuring ‘intermediate outcomes’ in three areas:

- *“participants’ learning and personal development*
- *changes in participants’ behaviour*
- *particular actions or projects that participants engage in within their schools as a requirement of the programme”*

(Simkins et al, 2007, p.9)

It is these intermediate outcomes that feature predominantly in this research. The more ambitious ‘final outcomes’ are not investigated in such detail as the report of their research for reasons stated earlier. Namely, that the identification of changes in pupil characteristics, changes in school culture and issues related to career progression require a more in-depth and longitudinal study. Like Hallinger and Heck (1999), they also recognise that *“it is much more difficult, and probably unrealistic, to make judgements about the impact of the programme on practice in classrooms and on pupil outcomes”* (Simkins et al, 2007, p.19).

Conclusion

This study into the impact of the LPSH takes the standpoint of the leader and this led to determine the qualities of leadership and its positive impact on the organisation. Nevertheless, it is vital to recognise that, in doing this, there are recognisable concerns about the validity of views expressed through the participants in the case study school.

Reviewing the different models of leadership highlights the need to understand that different leadership styles can be adapted at different times and in different contextual situations. Throughout the research activity, it is important to keep in mind the principles that drive the school leader to act in a particular way. McClelland summarised this best when he noted that:

“The best predictor of what a person can and will do is what s/he spontaneously thinks and does in an unstructured situation - or has done in similar past situations.”

(McClelland, 1987)

A two dimensional model is not appropriate in the complex organisation of schools and, consequently, a simple training programme may not have the impact needed to raise the level of leadership that will impact on the standards across the school. Only by reflecting on the perceptions of the changes in the work of the leader can we hope to gain some insight into the power of the LPSH to affect the quality of school leadership.

It is possible, through this type of research to assess, attribute and report on the perceptions of the extent to which people consider there to be a change in practice in leadership. Disaggregating the lines of cause and effect will not be possible in the study for this doctorate although it

will be feasible to look at how staff and school leaders perceive their training has helped nurture their leadership capabilities. As such, it will add to the debate on the impact of such training courses and will give an additional insight into how leaders demonstrate their skills in practice.

If this work is to have value then it is evident through the review of the literature that contingency theory has greater credibility in understanding leadership development as opposed to trait theory as described above. Consequently, the work in the case studies takes the view that situational, contextual and cultural perspectives are important to our understanding of people's views of leadership effectiveness. Simply trying to reflect behavioural aspects in a sterile, non-contextual setting will give a biased view of the leader. The work on attribution theory supports the need to understand a little about the context of the case study schools as well as the expanded behaviour patterns of the Headteachers in the study. This is covered in the Case Study Schools chapter.

The aspects linking school effectiveness to leadership effectiveness highlight the need for a style of leadership that is embodied within the whole school culture. In the eyes of HMI and OfSTED, the Headteacher is the key person who is responsible for setting the tone or culture of the school and it is the Headteacher's responsibility to disseminate that ethos through the leadership function of the rest of the staff. The link between leadership and culture is a powerful one and setting the right culture is a fundamental role of the Headteacher:

"Management and leadership are inextricably intertwined with the school's culture. Management practice and procedure are vehicles for the leadership to act when both activities are viewed as cultural action."

(Morgan, 1989, p.32)

Other staff have a role in leadership and the development of the ethos or culture of the school and it is important to recognise their input. Murphy points out that there is insufficient attention given to the teacher as a leader claiming that most researchers make the assumption *“that teaching is for teachers and leading is for administrators and managers of schools.”* (Lynch & Strodl, 1991, p.2 cited in Murphy, 1999, p.5). Murphy also reminds us that *“Hierarchical organisations also define power and authority in ways that dampen the viability of shared leadership”* (Murphy, 1999, p.102). We have to bear in mind that he is referring here to the work of school teachers and leaders in North America and that the divisions are more sharply focussed on the work of the leader as administrator.

Whilst some believe that the power for leading an organisation rests more commonly with the staff and key teachers within the school, the LPSH holds firm to the view that the most important person in terms of shaping the future of the school is the Head. When investigating the impact of the LPSH in schools, it is important to recognise this standpoint.

The aim of the LPSH is to transform school leadership through a training programme designed to encourage participant Headteachers to reflect on the processes involved in school leadership against a background of information on leadership style and the characteristics of highly effective school leaders. The review of the literature in this field highlights many of the problems in dealing with leadership as a concept. Whatever model of leadership prevails in a school, the style of leadership displayed by the Headteacher and the leadership characteristics which are formed from the Headteacher's leadership traits, it is difficult to describe and define the way that a person interacts with other people when using two, three or multi-dimensional models. What is clear is

that defining leadership is complex and that most Headteachers adopt more than one style of leadership in any given time, in any given context. On a five-day training programme, the LPSH cannot hope to cover the full range of variants but it can begin to challenge those Headteachers who have settled for their preferred style above the leadership style needed by their followers. Essentially, the aim of the LPSH in this respect is to encourage greater flexibility in the use of a range of management styles as required in different situations and with different people, applying the principles of contingency theory in school leadership practice.

In the research that follows, I have tried to uncover the view of the impact of the programme as expressed by Headteachers and by their subordinates. As for the programme itself, this research cannot cover all permutations and all views but it does offer some ideas as to some common opinion on the LPSH as well as some interesting ideas that could be pursued in the future with regard to leadership training for serving heads.

The LPSH model has many positive features and makes effective use of the theory and research that pre-dates the development of the course. Amongst the most significant influences are those that come out of contingency theory in which the importance of judging the different variables of the situation whilst recognising the need to achieve a specific goal is paramount. Whilst the course recognises the importance of bringing others on board within the school as a leadership responsibility, it is biased towards the influence of the leader rather than giving enough credence to the influencing role of followers.

Attribution theory would suggest a better balance of internal and external forces than those proposed by the LPSH model where the

success of an organisation is attributed more to the leadership of the Headteacher than the impact of others in the organisation. The implication of the LPSH stance on responsibility does not allow the leader to lay blame on others if their skills as a leader are not having the desired effect. Similarly, whilst there is recognition that different strategies are required in different school contexts, those different contexts are still within the control of the leader rather than being beyond their power to make a difference. The natural rationalisation process that people apply in order to preserve their self-esteem is challenged by the LPSH programme because it does not allow the blame to be placed externally. Everything is within the control of the 'effective' leader who has to read the situation, the characters involved and plan a route through different styles of leadership to achieve the desired goal. This creates pressure on the leader and, with no escape route, some Heads will find this model challenging and, where ineffective progress is being made, they could find it de-motivating.

The challenge of good quality training programmes is to push experienced participants to the edge of their comfort zone but not so far that they fall off the edge. The LPSH has achieved positive feedback from many participants but those who may have been pushed over the edge by this relentless focus on the role of the leader as the most influential person to effect positive change, may not have been given a platform to voice their concerns. This research could have uncovered such a case and there are elements of one respondent who displays some unease when confronted with some challenging feedback of the leadership displayed in the case study school. However, even in this case, there is a rationalisation of the process and an acceptance that the end result is determined by the actions of the leader. The LPSH has been successful, then, in these cases of persuading the participants that they have the power and influence to control the culture, achievements

and practices of their school. This may be an unreasonable hypothesis behind the programme but it is one that I believe dominates the LPSH.

3. Methodology

The two generally defined types of research methodology are those that use quantitative or qualitative techniques to collect and analyse data.

The starting point was to consider the research question and what would be the best methodological approach, qualitative or quantitative, or a combination of both.

Each approach works on different assumptions such that finding fault with one approach with the standards of another does little to promote understanding. Each should be judged on its theoretical basis. Each approach starts from basic assumptions. For example, within the quantitative approach social facts have an objective reality. The method is considered to be of supreme importance to the extent that variables can be identified and relationships measured. Within the qualitative approach reality is socially constructed. The subject matter is considered to be of supreme importance where the variables are complex, interwoven and difficult to measure.

Quantitative approaches begin with hypotheses and theories. They use formal instruments and have a high level of experimentation in order to control the impact of identified 'independent' variables on the 'dependant' variable that is the focus of the study. Following from this, the researcher analyses the components of the data and seeks some form of consensus to identify the norms. Quantitative approaches look at reducing data to numerical indices and are written up in a language that holds objectivity high on its agenda.

Qualitative approaches end with ideas for further research because conclusions are not regarded as finite. They cannot be objectively measured as is deemed to be the case with the more "scientific"

approaches of quantitative research . The researcher is seen as an instrument in the process. They have a more naturalistic and less “objective” approach which leads to a better understanding of relationships and perceptions. Qualitative approaches focus on patterns and repetitions of views. Whilst some use can be made of numerical indices, the write ups tend to be more descriptive than the seemingly objective write ups with quantitative research approaches. It is by comparing the approaches of both methods that the differences become clearer and influence the choice I made.

Both approaches have value in undertaking research into education although as researcher, I had to decide which would best address the questions that I wanted to explore. In this respect, a qualitative approach offered more scope to understand the perceptions that people had of the leadership activities undertaken within the school. The approach also permitted a broader view of the situation of each case study school, recognising that each was different in context and had different leadership needs. The danger of this type of research is that it is easy to be too descriptive in reporting back what has been uncovered in the case study schools. Likewise, there is also a danger of being over analytical and drawing conclusions that cannot be justified through reason and logic. Balancing the shift from specific to general is an important cautionary note for the qualitative researcher. The use of qualitative and quantitative approaches does not have to be mutually exclusive. Indeed, they can complement each other. For example, it would be quite reasonable to use a quantitative approach and then back up the findings with some case studies to test out the findings of the ‘hard’ data. Similarly, it would be possible to identify variables through qualitative research that could then be incorporated into a large scale quantitative study.

Bassey originally set out a division of empirical research into “*the search for generalisations and the study of singularities*” (Bassey , 1992, p.3) arguing that predictable generalisations can only come through large-scale research projects. Small-scale research cannot make such broad generalisations but can “*be valuable when suggesting possibilities for future action*” (Bassey, 1992, p.3). He later challenged this view to argue that it is possible to make “*fuzzy generalisations*” which allow the researcher to draw a set of conclusions about which, on the whole, the researcher and others can be confident (Bassey, 1999).

Research Question

I wanted to understand what this programme offered in terms of its impact on the people attending the course and the leadership of their school. This led me to formulate a general question of trying to identify the benefits to the school’s development as a result of investment in the training of Headteachers. More specifically, I focussed on the impact of the LPSH within the school. This became the central research question. Now I had to define what or who I meant by the school and the sub questions that arose from the main focus.

From this central question, I began to contemplate how answers could be investigated. I recognised that straight questions often have a complex nature that may elicit complex answers requiring intricate analysis. In order to find out the level and type of impact, I disregarded the quantitative approach as it would have to focus on data collection in terms of some form of measurable output. I considered whether I was looking for outputs in terms of student performance or outputs of some form of measurable impact of leadership on the examination results. If it were the former, can a school be badly led and still have high student output? From personal experience, I know that ineffective teaching can still result in very good exam results given the right grouping of students.

So, it seems a reasonable proposition to suggest that school standards, given the right grouping of teachers, associate staff and students, could be high regardless of the leadership effectiveness of the Head.

If I were to pursue a student output measure, I would need to be sure that examination results reflect a proxy measure of impact. There are so many variables to examination success as a measure of school achievement through pupil output that it was not considered to be a reliable source of verification of the impact of the course. This point is made by Hallinger and Heck (1999, see page 24 above) who recognise the limits of linking leadership to student outcomes .

The LPSH claims to allow Headteachers to focus and reflect on their leadership, to make staff more accountable and, by implication, to improve standards of achievement across the school. Yet, the link between leadership and student output in exam success is a difficult one to measure.

The Selection of a Qualitative Research Method

Having accepted that a qualitative approach would be more appropriate, I also had to consider the type of qualitative research that I am able to undertake. Questionnaires were one method of gathering a great deal of data in a short space of time but because of the complexities of leadership and identifying leadership outcomes, I felt that this would not provide the depth of understanding that I needed. Furthermore, schools are inundated with questionnaire surveys and the wastage factor would seriously damage the reliability of the research. The use of questionnaires would also bring me back to attempting a quantitative analysis which would fail to provide the depth of understanding about the perceptions of staff on the changing nature of leadership in their school. There were only 12 schools in the first group of Heads using the

revised LPSH model. If I surveyed all 12 Headteachers and their staff, I would probably not obtain sufficient quality data to draw any conclusions about the impact of the programme.

The Pilot Study

In order to decide on the best way forwards in gathering data, I undertook a pilot study with another school outside of the case study schools. The pilot study enabled me to practice the skills of being a researcher and conducting semi-structured interviews. I also had the chance to trial a questionnaire as well as testing out the interview schedule (see Appendix II). Feedback on the pilot questionnaire indicated that only a superficial response was going to be achieved and that the tool did not uncover the deeper aspects of identifying the impact of the leadership of the Headteacher as a result of attendance on the LPSH course. On discussing this with my tutor, we both agreed that the nature of the questions that I wanted to ask were too personal and could lead to direct criticism of the Heads by their subordinates in an unmanaged process. Consequently, I discarded this idea and looked for other strategies to use.

Background to the LPSH Model

As part of the LPSH programme, Heads have to select 6 colleagues to complete a detailed questionnaire to give insights into their leadership. These are used to give feedback to the LPSH participants during the first 3 days of their course. They identify aspects of organisational climate and managerial styles promoted by the Head. The Hay Group undertook an evaluation of the leadership programme using a before and after method of assessing the Heads against the LPSH standards. In their evaluative study, the questionnaires were repeated 9-10 months later. Consequently, Hay was able to plot the original levels against the

new levels. The improvement was noticeable and Hay claimed that this proved that the LPSH was having a positive impact in schools.

Unfortunately, there is a serious flaw in this argument as it assumes that the measures of organisational climate and managerial styles promoted by the LPSH have a positive influence on school effectiveness. Their research really only demonstrates that there is a greater use of different managerial styles being adopted and that there is a view that the organisational climate has changed (Hay would say “improved”). This work was carried out in Australia and has not been repeated in the UK. To repeat this type of exercise would be to repeat the set of assumptions used by Hay in their own study, which may not give insights into the impact on leadership or on their schools that research based on other assumptions might provide.

This led me to hone in on a set of case studies where the Headteachers who had attended the programme could provide useful qualitative data within the context of the school at that time. It would be an in-depth analysis of people’s perceptions of the impact of leadership in the school in terms of improving standards, within the boundaries created by the choice of leadership style espoused by the LPSH course.

It was clear that there would be no easy measure and that any research would still leave much to conjecture rather than concrete proof.

However, by focussing on different people within the organisation to triangulate views of staff and the Head, I would be able to add to a picture of the LPSH as it challenges Heads, raises the debate on the leadership style of the Head and has an inferred consequent impact on improvements in the school. In order to do this, I needed to identify a set of schools in order to research into how such impact could be measured.

Setting up the Case Studies

In order to carry out research in this area I designed a simple research strategy involving the identification of Case Study schools in which the Headteacher had joined the LPSH Programme. I interviewed the Heads and some of their staff to gauge their views about the impact of the LPSH. The first set of interviews were undertaken during the course and a final set were conducted at the end of their programme. The use of two points of contact over a one-year period helped see impact over a longer period of time.

Timeline of Case Study work

February 2003	Agreement on Access	January - March 2004	January - March 2005	May 2005
Pilot Study				
	November 2003			
		First Set of Case Study interviews		
			Second Set of Case Study interviews	
				Opportunity for follow up telephone interviews

Figure 3. 1 Interview Timeline

Bias: the objective role of the researcher

Throughout the research, I was conscious that there was a danger that my own role as a secondary Head may impose bias on the type of questions and the manner in which those questions are asked. It is inevitable that we judge others doing a similar job to our own and make

comparisons about their effectiveness based on personal views about what makes an effective Head. I was conscious throughout to try to avoid such judgements although I did find myself rating the Heads against a subjective set of criteria regarding their skills as school leaders. Making such judgements about effectiveness of the Head prior to visiting the school and between the two sets of interviews had to be set to one side to allow objective appraisal of the data from the interviews. I had to remain focused on what had been said during the interviews and the information that I had gathered regarding the schools involved. Knowing this could create bias in the way that I pursued questions in the interview stages and in my subsequent analysis of those interviews was a significant factor in reducing bias.

If bias is to be reduced, particularly in the interviews, and validity increased, *'the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of the respondent, and the substantive content of the questions'* (Cohen and Manion, 2001, pp. 281-2) need to be carefully considered. I tried not to pre-judge the Heads or their staff and I recognised the potential conflict that could emanate from my dual role as researcher and serving Head.

Bell (1999) reminds us of the importance of interviewers being aware of the possibility of bias 'creeping into an interview':

"...as Selltiz et al. (196 p.583) point out, 'interviewers are human beings and not machines', and their manner may have an effect on the respondents."

(Bell 1999, p139)

Throughout the interviews, I was mindful of this comment which is why I used a semi-structured interview technique. The general areas of questioning kept me focused on the core purpose of the interviews whilst still allowing time to pursue particular areas of interest beyond the

original set of interviews. I had to be careful not to allow myself to be too side-tracked in pursuing tangential information and I believe that I managed this well. In many respects, I was following the view of Gavron (in Bell, 1999, p.95) who recognised that bias could not be avoided in research by interviewers working alone. She considered that awareness and constant self-control would help keep bias in check, a factor that I was conscious of throughout the process. Like Bell (1999) suggests, it is better to acknowledge the possibility of bias in interviews rather than ignore the possibility altogether.

To achieve validity in this research, it was important to consider the element of bias in the data gathering methods. I made judgments on how respondents perceived how certain characteristics relating to the Headteacher's effectiveness improved over time. This improvement was drawn from comparing the perceptions of the Headteachers on their own performance with the perceptions of their staff.

It was important to preserve my research integrity by acknowledging my role as a serving Headteacher of a secondary school. I had to recognise that my own experience, understanding and practice of the role of Headteacher may have influenced my conclusions because of my responses to points made by the interviewees. Where my views on Headship were different from the Heads of the case study schools, it was important not to allow this to bias my judgements. I also felt under pressure to maintain my independence from the NCSL who were partly sponsoring my research. As a Research Associate, I was cautious to remain objective and not simply tell them what I think they wanted to hear.

Consideration of the role of the researcher is significant with regard to the approaches and to my choice of the qualitative method. The

quantitative researcher adopts a stance of detachment and impartiality and aims to provide an objective portrayal of the data. The qualitative researcher assumes a level of personal involvement and aims to provide an informed empathetic understanding of the information gathered. It was this more personalised view point that I wanted to uncover when considering the impact of the LPSH on the school leadership of the Head. I wanted to draw out an understanding of the ways that Headteachers led their schools differently as a result of attending the course, if there was a difference at all.

Recognising the context of the school:

It was important to undertake the interviews within a clear understanding of the context in which the Head was operating. I have adopted the contingency model as I believe that it is necessary that the leadership style may be very different in different school settings for a number of reasons. Furthermore, the social and educational context of each school is likely to require differing responses from the Head. Research by Hallinger and Murphy (1987) concludes that *“social context influences several school effectiveness factors, including principal instructional leadership”* (Hallinger and Murphy, 1987 p. 21). A similar point is made by Leithwood and Riehl:

“While mastery of these basics provides no guarantee that a leader’s work will be successful in a particular school context, lack of mastery likely guarantees failure. A successful leader needs to do more but cannot do less...successful leaders address the particularities of their contexts appropriately”

(Leithwood and Riehl, 2003, p.5)

Consequently, it would be unrealistic to expect that the style and process of school leadership is not affected by the social, economic and cultural context of the school. The case study schools do, therefore,

need to be looked at within their own contexts, which were selected so that they were very different in each case. It is not possible to conclude that similarities or differences are prevalent just on the basis of the style of leadership of the Head. Other influencing factors will impact on this and throughout the research it is important to recognise this. Details of the schools are included in Chapter 4.

The Training Model used in LPSH:

In order to conduct a meaningful and robust piece of research, it was essential to understand the context of this programme and to formulate some ideas about the leadership engineering that is taking place by the Hay Group and NCSL. For this purpose, I conducted a taped conversation with two senior personnel in the Hay Group who were involved in the design and roll out of the pilot programme and the first series of courses in order to investigate the nature of the LPSH and the principles upon which it is based. This was transcribed but I was not given permission to use this as part of this research. Instead, I have drawn from the conversations and have added elements of the design of the programme to inform generalised views about the structure, content and parameters of the LPSH.

I concluded from these conversations that the LPSH has been used to define leadership of schools in a way that rewards those Headteachers who are adopting a pattern of leadership influenced by the Hay Group and accepted as valid by the UK government, the NCSL and espoused through this training programme. During the conversation with Hay Group personnel, I was able to challenge the original sample and also explore the way in which the first group of schools were selected. There appeared to be a lack of clarity about how the original sample of “good” Heads was gathered. It was noted by the senior personnel at Hay that the original 48 Heads who were the measure for the LPSH standard

were selected by OfSTED, the TTA and others at the DfES. They were chosen because they were considered to be highly effective Heads by these government sponsored organisations. Similarly, the first LPSH pilot course also comprised a governmental view of “good” Heads. I was not in a position to challenge their assumptions, which has led to a concern that the data used to make judgements about the baseline measures for effective heads cannot be verified. This was a limiting factor in the research. I was left without answers as to whether they were really able to claim that their sample was a selection of good Heads or Heads of good schools? Did they outwardly display effective leadership that led to high attainment through a positive educational environment in the school, or were they simply in the right place at the right time and able to capitalise on the perception of their effectiveness as understood by those in the position to make that judgement? In other words, were their schools successful in spite of their intervention or as a direct result of it? The application of attribution theory would be relevant here but there was no clear answer to this point. It is important then that the reader recognises that the selection of the group of ‘effective’ heads was not a perfect process and did not stand the test of objectivity at even the simplest level. My conversation partners at Hay were unable to clarify this point and it was therefore an important question to explore further through the chosen case study schools as well as through the analysis of the transcripts from the interviews. In this and in other ways, for example, in the style of leadership chosen, I needed to challenge the programme’s effectiveness.

Time Pressures on the Researcher

The time pressure as a part-time researcher engaged in a full time job also raised the danger that I might have taken short cuts in my arguments and not fully explored all the possibilities open to me. Indeed, this is an issue for all researchers. You have to decide at some point

that you have enough information to draw conclusions rather than continuously reading and researching new tangents that can be used as distracters from completing the write-up. The time limitations did present some areas that were only raised by individual interviewees and I was not able to go back and check whether others held similar views. However, I have added these points into the analysis because I felt that they seemed reasonable points even though the scope of the research limited the reliability of the comments. Time was a major factor which I had to consider in making decisions regarding the precise method to adopt. I estimated that I would not have sufficient time to carry out a meaningful quantitative survey of a number of schools, before and after the Headteacher training, and analyse, compare and present a substantial report. Central to this I was confident that I could gather sufficient depth and that the findings would meet the principles of both reliability and validity through a qualitative study.

Maintaining the integrity of independent research

Undertaking research into a programme that is under the protective arm of the NCSL was complicated and freedom of access to the people I wished to use in terms of the research was an essential pre-requisite to maintaining quality in this work. It was a complex matter to gain the support of the NSCL officer responsible for the LPSH so that I could be given names of Heads who had attended the training programme in its revised format. It took considerable discussion before the list was presented and delayed my work by two months because I believed it to be vital that I be allowed to select the case study schools, independently of the NCSL. It was never going to be easy to do this because of the sensitive nature of the research. Investigating the principles on which a government sponsored training programme was founded could undermine national strategy in leadership training although I doubt that the influence of this limited research study could have such far-reaching

implications. Senior staff at NCSL were not prepared to allow anything to undermine their training programme or, more importantly, their position within the organisation. This was complicated also by the fact that the NCSL was undergoing a difficult period of transition from the first Chief Executive to its second and had just undergone a five-year review of its effectiveness. This review was, in part, critical of some of the activities of the NCSL and staff were concerned to protect their interests and future career prospects. Nevertheless, my perseverance in this fundamental issue of researcher integrity was worth the delay, otherwise the validity of the entire project could have been undermined.

I was also aware that an important part of my work must not ignore the value of questioning the extent to which the LPSH might be engineered as a programme to ensure that centrally-held views of school leadership were permeated through the system without question. I needed to question whether or not the model set out by the Hay Group through LPSH and supported by NCSL was a means of driving through a particular style of school leadership at the expense of other strategies. It was important to retain an open mind in this domain and to see if these issues were raised and answered by respondents in the interviews.

A case study can be seen to satisfy the three tenets of the qualitative method: describing, understanding, and explaining (see Yin, 1994). The literature contains numerous examples of applications of the case study method. The earliest and most natural examples are to be found in the fields of law and medicine, where "cases" make up the large body of the student work (see Tellis, 1997). Case studies have been increasingly used in education. While law and medical schools have been using the technique for an extended period, the technique is being applied in a variety of educational situations. Businesses and schools have been keen to promote the use of case-based learning, or "*active learning*"

(Boisjoly & DeMichiell, 1994). Case studies are an inversion of this model in that case-based learning draws from previous experience of similar incidents. Case study research analyses situations and draws conclusions or further hypotheses to inform new learning.

There are some areas that have used case study techniques extensively, particularly in government and in evaluative situations. The government studies were carried out to determine whether particular programmes were efficient or if the goals of a particular programme were being met. The evaluative applications were carried out to assess the effectiveness of educational initiatives. In both types of investigations, reliance on quantitative techniques tended to obscure some of the important information that the researchers needed to uncover. In particular, this qualitative or “soft” information was essential if improvements were to be made to the initiative or programme.

Case studies can be single or multiple-case designs. Multiple cases strengthen the results by replicating the pattern-matching, thus increasing confidence in the robustness of the theory that has informed the design and analysis (Yin, 1994). Pilot projects are very useful in determining the final protocols that will be used. Survey questions may be dropped or added based on the outcome of the pilot study. Selecting cases is a difficult process, but the literature provides guidance in this area (Yin, 1989; Bassey, 1999). In my research, I used a school to pilot the semi-structured interviews in order to gauge the timeframe for the interviews and thereby plan the day visits to the schools. In order to do this pilot, I sought the approval of the school and agreed that the findings would only be shared within the school and not used in any part of the research. I felt that it was important to make this clear for ethical reasons so that the school knew their role in the research process. Essentially, they were agreeing to help me design a series of interview

questions to be used in a subsequent piece of research. I used the same strategies of recording and transcribing the interviews but then made every effort to ensure that I did not allow this information to contaminate the work of the research study by having a gap of a year between the pilot and the actual study.

The pilot enabled me to refine my areas of questioning and to work out a way to select a range of staff appropriate to the needs of the study. I wanted to make sure that I had a reasonable cross-section of staff within the limitations of my time spent in the school. I had to balance the school's needs for releasing staff with my time constraints as a researcher whilst making sure that I had a reasonable sample to gauge people's views within the school.

Stake (1995) recommended that the selection offers the opportunity to maximize what can be learned, knowing that time is limited. Hence, the cases that I selected needed to be accessible and comprise willing colleagues to support the research.

Case study approaches offer solutions to types of research where there is uncertainty about what is actually taking place. In the work on LPSH, it is unclear whether the programme is having a direct impact on the functional leadership of schools or whether this is an invalidated perception. Yin confirms the view that a case study is:

“the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon with some real-life context”

Yin (1994, pp 106-7)

My investigation into staff perceptions based on their personal interactions with the Head and the feelings and views of the Headteachers as well, could lead to some speculative findings that would then lead to further research projects. Responses from people are often ambiguous and it is difficult to attribute clear cause and effect processes in a scientific method of research. However, by cross-referencing responses from a range of staff in a number of schools, specific links might be replicated leading to possible hypotheses and tentative conclusions.

Prior to undertaking the research, I was not sure that there were identifiable outcomes and, if there were, what form those outcomes might take. It seemed that one measure for testing this would be to meet Heads from the LPSH course and triangulate their views with those working with them. This could then be replicated with other Headteachers and their staff in a range of different settings. Through this process, I would be able to determine any repeated occurrences that may enable some speculation about the effects of the LPSH course. This would give some element of reliability to the research process.

Whilst working on this approach, it became increasingly clear that my research question, (*“what is the impact of the LPSH training on the school?”*) implies a definition of the school that is limited to the perception of the Headteacher and certain members of staff. This in itself is a restrictive feature of the research but one that I hoped would be less of an issue if I chose teachers for cross referencing the impact of the leadership of the Headteacher.

Due to the constraints of time, sponsorship and, to some extent, methodological factors, pupils have not been directly involved in this research. It is evident from the nature of the LPSH course and the Hay

group evaluation, that pupil opinion was not a considered indicator other than using the school's examination results as a measure of success. To include pupils would introduce a discussion around leadership styles which is outside the intended scope of this research. I consider it to be an area requiring further investigation. There should be an important link between effective leadership and pupil performance. Such a link has a fundamental impact on the culture and success of the school. It therefore follows that the quality of leadership ought to have some impact in determining the performance of pupils in the school. Measuring this as a direct impact of a specific training course, however, is unreasonable in the timescale of the project and would not survive any current test of objective cause and effect. The work of Hallinger and Heck (1999, see page 24 above) also indicates that this link is a difficult one to measure and that this link only has a small impact on outcomes for pupils.

I have tried to avoid having a pre-determined scientific hypothesis and a fixed view of probable outcomes. As a researcher, I attempted to approach the case studies with an open mind and not to subscribe to the positivist approach espoused by Yin (1994). This seems to assume that the work is predictable and not under the subjective influence and variability of people as an influencing factor throughout the research. Headteachers, and other school workers who bring their own perceptions to the way they visualise leadership for improvement do not always comply with a preconceived or accepted notion of leadership and its impact. Their actions have reactions and their words, opinions and values have an impact on the world around them. This creates a dynamic, ever-changing landscape of leadership and development. In one sense, I have respect for a positivist approach as it offers structure and rigour to the process. I also feel that such an approach could be relevant to the strategy for uncovering answers to the research question.

However, the work of Yin (1994) implies that a case study approach, being so subjective, cannot offer the measurable means of testing out the research question. He claims that there is a:

“...lack of rigor of case study research. Too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions....take too long and result in massive, unreadable documents provide very little basis for scientific generalisations.”

Yin (1994, p. 73)

His criticism of this method challenges the validity of case study research. Bassey (1999) would agree that there is a danger that small scale case study methods cannot give enough information from which to draw conclusions but can add to a wider body of knowledge that, when pieced together could at least allow others to draw “*fuzzy generalisations*”. I believe that there is much to be gained by embracing the variations in viewpoints of case study schools and of being influenced in different directions during the research period.

Yin’s solution is to combine this strategy with other methods that would be more objective. My solution was to recognise its subjectivity at the outset and try to take account of the issues surrounding reliability of evidence by giving readers the flexibility to draw their own conclusions outside of those proffered by me, if they feel that my analysis is too distant from their own interpretation of the data.

Improving Reliability:

By using five case study schools, I sought to make it possible to draw more general conclusions through the multiple-case design of the research. The replication of key principles and ideas in more than one

case study school should assist in providing a more reliable set of findings, thus allaying some of the limitations expressed by Yin (1994).

A similar view challenging the reliability of case study research was previously espoused by Easterby-Smith et al (1991) who argue that:

"the social world exists externally, and that its properties should be measured through objective methods, rather than being inferred subjectively, through sensation, reflection or intuition"

Easterby-Smith et al (1991, p.22)

My research approach was to view the reality of the world as a social construct, not easily measured, but one that could be understood by observing the "actors" and their interactions in specific contexts, in this case, in schools. Furthermore, I recognise that the construction of this reality is a flexible concept and one that can alter with the merest of changes to one small aspect of its very being.

I felt that the case studies with which I was engaged fitted more with the view of Cohen and Manion (2001) who recognised this as an appropriate method that *"seeks to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors and consequently may be described as interpretative and subjective"* (p.53).

I was dealing with highly subjective matter – views of the impact of the leadership following engagement in LPSH. I did not want this to *"degenerate into a story"* (Hartley, 1994, p.210). I wanted to create a picture of people's views and check to see if there were common threads that could be drawn out to help us make sense of what we see happening in school as a direct consequence of leadership.

Nisbet and Watt (1984) show how the case study acts to exemplify the issues:

*“A case study is more than just an extended example of anecdote interestingly narrated. It has the same virtues – interest, relevance, a sense of reality – but it goes beyond mere illustration. First it gathers evidence **systematically**, in a ‘scientific’ way...Second, it is concerned essentially with the **interaction** of factors and events. Sometimes it is only by taking a practical instance that we can obtain a full picture of this interaction. Statistical analysis can identify important determining factors in a problem area; but to establish how these factors relate to each other in the real situation, it may be necessary to examine a specific case systematically and in detail.”*

(Nisbet and Watt, 1984, p. 73.)

In my research, I want to present the issues and to suggest conclusions based on a logical interpretation of the variable and subjective data in order to shed light on the impact of the LPSH on school leadership. The approach will not simply tell the story but will analyse the narrative from a personal perspective. The reader then has the opportunity to accept or reject my interpretation.

Case studies have been successfully used to study matters related to headship training in the past (see Weindling and Earley, 1987; Hellawell, 1988). They pointed to the literature on Headship as being irrelevant to practitioners. They present a view that research about school leadership is far too abstract and detached from practice or too narrow and disengaged from the person and his or her context. Consequently,

they determine that it is of little use to those leading our schools. Instead, they state that they would prefer to see action research studies carried out by practitioners in each of the school leadership tiers from classroom teacher, through middle management and on to senior management (see Weindling and Earley, 1987; Hellowell, 1988). My research is practitioner research by a serving Head, reflecting and commenting on the reality of the leadership functions and measuring these against my own experience and that of the Heads of the case study schools. I argue that this keeps the research relevant and real in terms of its understanding of the impact of the work in practice. Consequently, there is greater validity of the interpretation and analysis of the views expressed by the interviewees in the case study schools.

A number of other researchers in the 1980s and early 1990s have supported the use of case study as a research tool. These include Simons (1996), Shaw (1978), and Stenhouse (1980). Lambert (1991) also provides a compelling case for this approach:

“The diagnostic power of in-depth case study work will help to review the whole picture including the underlying structure, teachers’ perceptions, the complexity of the interaction of the users, the context of change, the implemented curriculum and the decision making process of teachers”

Lambert (1991, p. 31)

It is for this reason that I have remained with this method and believe that it has been possible to see part at least of the picture based on the views of those within the case study schools as a whole. I may not have achieved the in-depth case study research that Lambert has praised, yet I have achieved a cross-case analysis which I hope is useful and insightful in the conclusions that are drawn.

Research Strategy

The methodology chosen was multiple case study using semi-structured interviews as the main data collection tool. This strategy offers the researcher the chance to delve deep into the areas of impact. Drawing on contingency theory, the schools are the cases as it is important to recognise that leadership functions operate within a context. These case studies allow for an analysis of leadership impact against the contextual background of the school.

Case study research is an approach adopted by researchers whose projects focus on social sciences particularly those monitoring social interaction. There is a clear case for adopting this approach because leadership is carried out by people who involve others in their vision for the organisation through social interaction.

The Research Design

Based on the preparatory reading of OfSTED reports, my interviews with the Hay group and NCSL personnel and taking into account lessons learned from the pilot project, my research involved the collection and analysis of qualitative data in five schools. The data were gathered using interviews. Interviews allow one aspect of research to be examined in depth over a short period of time. These are more appropriate to this research because of the detailed analysis of school context and leadership capability that affects the impact quality of the LPSH.

Individual interviews with staff were undertaken with care and sensitivity to allow the interviewees to express their opinions in an open and honest manner rather than encouraging them to simply reflect the views or bias of the interviewer. Central to this strategy was the avoidance of leading questions. In order to prepare these, I had undertaken a prior

piece of work which acted as a pilot study. The experience of doing this informed the development of this study even though one of the methods used (questionnaire) was discarded for this research.

Selecting the Cases

The case study schools were chosen from a list of 30 schools in a pilot of the revised LPSH programme. My first task was to obtain a list of those attending NCSL training on the LPSH and then to look at the geographical spread and contextual situation of the various schools. One participant refused to allow me access and I was forced to find a replacement school. The other participants were genuinely interested in being involved in the research and were initially keen to accommodate my visit. Access was not so easy on the return visit because of the lapse of time and the inevitable intrusion that a visit by a researcher makes in the life of a busy school. In the same way that I was able to select the case study schools, I selected the staff for interview and sought their support for the research independently of the Headteacher. With research of this nature, there are ethical issues to consider, not least those that would draw respondents to make value judgements about themselves or their super-ordinate, the Headteacher. I had to be mindful of the sensitivity of the data that I would receive in the interviews and it was made clear at the outset that interviewees were speaking in confidence and that transcripts or direct reporting of what they had said would not be shared with others except through non-attributable processes. They were guaranteed their anonymity and I was able to confirm that none of the schools nor the interviewees would be able to be identified by name. Having given those assurances and acting upon them, I was able to gain the support of the participants in each of the case study schools. I decided not to allow the interviewees to review their transcripts as I thought that they would then try to re-write what they had said. I also made it clear to the Heads that the feedback they

received would be generalised within the context of the whole set of case studies.

Selecting the Range of Case Study Schools

Three of the case study schools were primary and two were secondary phase. No special schools were included as this created too much variance in the model. The greater number of primary in the sample reflects the higher number of schools but is not in proportion to the balance of primary and secondary Headteachers. This allowed at least two secondary schools to be included in the sample for comparative purposes. The schools were geographically spread across England although they were mainly in the southern half of the country. I was able to identify a school in a unitary authority, an urban environment, a rural community and a shire county. Only one of the Heads was male but a range of male and female teachers were identified in the interviews. All were from a white, British background. This was not achieved by design although it is important to acknowledge that no account of different perspectives on ethnic grounds was considered as part of this research.

Gaining Access to the Case Study Schools

Initial contact with the Heads was made by telephone and agreement sought on the visit required for the case study work. Once agreement was made, a date for the initial visit was arranged within the Spring Term, 2004. At the end of this first visit, a follow-up date was identified a year later (Spring Term, 2005) for a further face to face interview with the Headteacher and the other teachers involved in the initial interviews.

Early visits were relatively easy to arrange. The second visit to each school was problematic in some cases due to staff departures or non-availability and, for one school, the second visit had to be rescheduled

twice due to the serious illness of the Headteacher. Nevertheless, a good range of evidence was secured from the interviews and it was possible to revisit all the schools within 18 months of the first visit.

In order to give a feel for each of the schools, I undertook a brief summary of the contexts for each school at the time the research was carried out.

Protecting Anonymity

The Schools were re-named A, B, C, D and E. The Heads were identified as Head of School A, B, C, D and E. Senior Staff are generically referred to as Deputy Head and the others as teachers. A separate chapter outlining the background contextual information for each school precedes the analysis of the case study findings.

The Interviews

In each case study school, interviews took place with the Headteacher and a cross-section of 4 other teaching staff drawn from across the school. In order to obtain a variety of opinion and perspectives from each school, I identified:

- A main scale teacher;
- A middle leader (such as Year Leader, Subject Leader);
- A senior manager; and,
- A fourth member of staff chosen at random.

The Headteachers of the case study schools gave me permission to choose the individuals who worked within the areas of responsibility set out above. They did this without interference and did not try to influence my choices. Having explained this need to each of them, they recognised the need to maintain objectivity in the selection process. I

intended to ensure a gender balance among my selection of interviewees, while at the same time trying to reflect the gender balance within each school. The decision to interview a range of people was to provide a “*means of validating accounts and observations*” (The Open University, 2006, p.67). The triangulation ensures that the views of one person are tested against others within the same school and across all five case study schools. These interviews allow me to penetrate the styles and qualities shown by Headteachers in their leadership and also allow respondents the opportunity to offer tangential information that may be of value in assessing a Headteacher’s performance in leadership.

I decided that I would not explore the opinions of associate (support) staff for the purposes of this research study due to reasons of manageability. However, in an ideal situation these views should have been taken as their opinions also need to be studied if a full understanding of the impact of the training on the leadership of the Headteacher were to be understood fully.

The interviews with the staff selected were conducted after the participant Headteachers had embarked on the LPSH training. After the Headteacher had completed Day 5 of the programme, a follow-up, face to face interview took place with all the interviewees in the five schools to determine if they perceived any impact after objectives had been set as a result of the training and contact with the mentor. This gave me two points of contact with the case study schools and allowed the evaluation of short-term changes in attitude and approach to leadership as well as longer term developments.

In order to have a consistent approach to the interviewing in each school, I used a set of standard questions as a starting point, deviating from the

template as necessary in response to the comments made by each of the interviewees. I adopted a semi-structured interviewing approach. This gave me a set of questions to probe but allowed me room to follow the views of respondents and to follow their thinking rather than imposing my own ideas on them. The semi-structured questioning techniques, applied against a standard set of questions, give form to the interview. It was useful when analysing the responses. The schedule for these interviews can be found in Appendix III.

The interview schedule began by asking questions about the characteristics of a good Headteacher and the style of leadership that would be expected. It probed into the Head's role in school improvement and raising standards. Following this, I asked about questions to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the Head's leadership. This could have been a very sensitive area of discussion but most respondents appeared to answer openly. I then asked about their leadership strategies and leadership styles, encouraging them to give practical examples so that I could check their understanding of the terminology that they used. Following this, I then focused on what they had observed in terms of any change in the leadership functions of the Headteacher. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes although time slots of 60 minutes had been arranged in case of interruptions, over-running or late starting. The measures that teachers and Heads used to judge if the Head's leadership had changed or improved were derived from the responses to the interviews.

The second interviews were conducted after the participant Headteachers had completed all aspects of the LPSH programme. Following this, I secured the opportunity for a follow-up telephone interview with the Head to clarify any points of uncertainty that might have arisen through the reading of transcripts in order to be sure of key

issues that emerged. In the event, this was not needed and no subsequent follow-up phone calls were made. I returned to the schools to undertake a further interview with the Head and as many other members of staff from the original sample as possible. I focussed my questioning on pushing them to identify any impact that they thought might have happened as a result of the LPSH training course.

Recording the Interviews:

All interviews were audio recorded in agreement with participants and field notes were taken. The field notes were intended as a back-up measure to allow for failure of the technical equipment but also to record any significant aspects of body language, which may clarify meaning in the conversations and key issues as they emerge at interview.

In practice, I had little need to refer to these notes as the audio recordings were of good quality, allowing for a thorough transcript to be produced prior to the final analysis of the interviews. The transcripts were taken from the recordings made at each interview and I decided that it was not, therefore, necessary to have these verified by the interviewees. My thinking at the time was that they might try to challenge things that they had said and to try to alter the messages that they had given on the day of their interview. However, from an ethical point, it would, in retrospect, have been better to have provided them with the transcripts as a matter of professional courtesy even if this did cause me additional work in rationalising what had been said during the interview if they subsequently attempted to reinterpret the interview dialogues.

As with all qualitative research, there is a danger that the reliability of the judgements is questionable when there is no clear cause and effect link. Only after undertaking the interviews would it be evident if any links are

being drawn by the interviewees. I was determined to keep an open mind about the views being expressed and any links between the LPSH course and the identified changes in leadership of the Headteacher.

Interviews are a very time effective method to gathering detailed information through good questioning and probing the initial responses of the interviewees. This works well when a carefully structured process is employed, allowing the researcher as interviewer to check that the responses are consistent and appear to be reliable as evidence.

Steadman (1982) recognises the need for an objective approach:

“By adopting the correct procedures, structuring the interview, establishing the necessary rapport, defining the information required, presenting the questions in a neutrally worded, standard fashion, supporting with noncommittal cues and cross-checking whatever information is obtained against other sources, contact with a general view of the reality of the situation may be maintained.”

(Steadman, 1982, p 215)

However, despite this planned structured approach, it is possible that the researcher may be duped into believing comments made are true when they are not or feeling that they understand what is being said when a different meaning is being proffered. Checking understanding and asking supplementary questions is a necessity when interviewing:

“Listening by itself, of course, does not always lead to depth of understanding. Probing is necessary to get behind the expected response to test the significance of what you are being told.”

Simons (in McCormick et. al. 1982, p 241)

Analysis of the Interviews

My approach within the multiple case study method involved the simultaneous processes of data collection, note-taking and trying to group the information from the start of the interviews. The sorting came later when all the categories mentioned above were exhausted. The writing began after this to try to draw together all the different features of the process. It was a complex and cyclical procedure, requiring me to review the audio tapes and the transcripts over and over again. I had considered applying Grounded Theory to the analysis of the interview transcripts and had also looked at an alphabetical coding system as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994). Instead, I developed my own rather long-winded but, for me, effective and systematic reviewing of the key issues that arose from the various conversations. Through this, the issues of impact from the LPSH could be drawn out from single responses and put to the test in the other case studies. I did not, as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.65-68) undertake a word by word analysis and “*coding the meaning found in words or groups of words*” but looked at general ideas following on from my understanding by conducting the interview in the first place, through to the analysis of the transcripts to highlight areas of relevance to the research. This was more in line with the system promoted by Dey (1993) who suggests that key points in the interview are highlighted and marked with letters and numbers to group the type of response. In the case of this research, I looked for different indicators of impact as conceived by the interviewees as well as negative points that indicated a lack of impact.

The LPSH sets out a vocabulary of leadership that enables participants to share ideas about their dominant learning style. It was noted that some of these styles were considered preferable to others yet, without a detailed understanding of the context of the school, it was not possible to understand the appropriateness of different styles as applied in a

specific school. I was able to call on my own knowledge of school leadership in different contexts when analysing the interviews from the different case study schools as derived from the study of the literature on leadership styles.

The process of data collection and analysis vindicated my choice of a qualitative methodology, using a semi-structured interview approach to create an opportunity for me to follow up the responses made by the interviewees in a sensitive manner.

4. The Case Study Schools

In undertaking this research, I decided to find a range of schools from different areas. Three were in the Primary phase and two were secondary. They were all within 4 hours of London to assist me as researcher in making the trips to the school to carry out the interviews. Whilst they are geographically close and all based in the southern half of England, it was felt that there was enough variation amongst the schools and their contexts to enable a reasonable range to be achieved with a small sample of cases.

In the literature review (see p.34 above), I explain that the context of the school should be taken into account when reviewing the leadership activities of the Head and other staff. In order for the reader to have some understanding of the nature of the environments in which these schools were operating, I have added here a brief summary of some of the key contextual points about the school's social and ethnic mix. Some of this has been gathered using OfSTED reports. Other information has come through my experience of talking with staff on the school visits as well as comments from the Headteachers. I did try to tabulate this information but felt that there were too many differences in school contexts to draw these together in a meaningful way.

School A

School A is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive, foundation (formerly grant maintained) school with some 1400 students on roll including 220 in the sixth form. School A is in a shire county in the south of England and serves a mixed community of rural and town areas, including the outskirts of a small city.

There are a significant number of students from social priority housing in the area, which is recognised as having a very high incidence of intravenous drug users and significant issues of social unrest. In 2004, there was a murder opposite the school. Children of two feuding families came to the school, with resultant pastoral implications. There have been regular reports of a significant amount of vandalism at weekends in the locality. The established residents blame the school for much of this unrest. This does not appear to be totally justified due to the higher than average unemployment rate in the families of many of the children who attend the school. This is also partly skewed by a growing number of more middle class parents opting to send their children into the city schools where it is perceived that higher standards of discipline and academic achievement can be found. The school has identified around 13% of its students as having special educational needs.

The school attained specialist status as a Technology College and has Investors in People accreditation. The school is part of a network learning community comprising eight schools. At the time of the interviews, the Head was co-leader of this organisation. A networked learning community is a NCSL programme to link schools in partnership, sharing ideas and expertise (see NCSL, 2007a).

The school achieves well against similar schools nationally, with an average of 60% plus students attaining 5 A* - C grades at GCSE although this figure dipped disappointedly in the year prior to the interviews and has continued on a downward trend. This is explained by the Head as a direct result of the migration of the more affluent and more academic population.

School B

School B is a recently amalgamated Infant and Junior school with 420 pupils on roll. The amalgamation took place following an OfSTED Inspection report which placed the Junior school in serious weaknesses. Following the OfSTED report and just prior to amalgamation, the Head and Deputy Head of the Junior school left and the Head of the Infant school was appointed Head of the combined new school. Several more Junior school staff also left at this time and the remaining staff were, according to the Headteacher, demoralised.

There is a local travellers' site from which the school currently has 29 children. There are also several bail hostels in the area, housing people who have been in prison and who are brought out to integrate into the community. The school has in its catchment area a significant amount of social housing providing what the Head describes as 'lots and lots and lots of problems' involving social services and children on the 'at risk' register. The school also has some children with physical disabilities. The Head argues that inclusiveness is a strength of the school.

Unemployment is significant in the area. The free school meals category is 20% - 30%. However, it was asserted by the Head that many who qualify do not claim the free meals. This information could not be verified. None of the travellers' families are entitled because they do not have a permanent address so their children are not part of the calculation. The school catchment also includes some of the largest and most expensive houses in the area. The school has a few professional families who are very supportive and who the Head hopes will 'spark off the rest of the population'.

School C

School C is an Independent Day School for children from the ages of 2 - 11. The school is situated in extensive grounds on the outskirts of a large county to the south of London. There are 182 students on roll. The children are taught in co-educational classes between two and half and eight years of age. From eight to eleven years, the boys and girls are taught in single sex classes although where there are insufficient girls and boys to fill classes, they are mixed following consultation with parents. There are many children with special needs (dyslexia, physical and a range of different learning disorders). The Head claims that whilst this has a negative impact on the schools' performance tables, the school is not concerned about this because it is confident that they are achieving beyond that which they might achieve in the state system. Parents, it seems, share this view.

In 2001 the school was awarded the Investor in People status which was retained following inspection in 2004. The school performs very well and was able to demonstrate that the level of performance in the KS2 SATs examinations was well above the national average and showed a very positive value-added score.

School D

School D is a comprehensive secondary school for students from 11 to 16 years of age, situated in a large county to the north-east of London. It has specialist Science College status. There are just over 1000 students on roll. The school opened as a result of an amalgamation of two existing schools. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below the national average. The socio-economic context of the areas from which pupils are drawn is broadly average.

The school was described as very effective by OfSTED in 2001 and recently achieved a similarly positive report. The examination results achieved by pupils are above the national average and well above those of similar schools. The Head believes that these high standards result from the good teaching which pupils experience and the students' very good attitudes to school and to learning. The leadership and management of the school are excellent as judged by OfSTED.

School E

School E is a large infant school situated in a unitary authority north of London. There are 420 students on roll and approximately 90% are from the ethnic minority community. About 60% are of Pakistani heritage, 20% Bangladeshi with the rest comprising black Caribbean, black African, mixed race as well as a number of Kashmiri children. A main issue is EAL and the fact that a lot of children take extended holidays abroad, to go back and forward to their homeland, missing significant periods of their education. The school allows a month for such visits and after 6 weeks they are taken off roll.

The free school meals percentage has been 20% but has recently fallen to 16%. In February 2002, an OfSTED inspector commented that the children were actually much poorer than they would appear on statistical evidence. The school is part of an initiative that aims to tackle deprivation.

Although parents support the school in many ways and relationships are good, some are not able to help their children with their academic work because English is not spoken at home. Neither are they able to come to after school meetings or join in evening activities due to family commitments.

5. The Case Studies

Analytical Process

The following section covers the presentation and interpretation of the data from the interviews in the case study schools. There are five schools, labelled School A, B,C, D and E. The quotations are initially identified by school, then by respondent and finally according to the first or second visit. In order to analyse the data from the interviews, I transcribed each one in turn and then, using the written transcripts alongside the original recordings of the interviews, drew out the common themes from each respondent. I was then able to cross reference different themes amongst the case study schools and draw out some common conclusions as well as some individual responses.

Whilst some of the issues were only raised by one person in one school, I felt that it was important to note these singular items. Whilst they may not be reliable in terms of a more generalised view of the LPSH, each point does bring with it a view on the impact of the programme that might be relevant for future research programmes. Consequently, it was felt useful to log the point but also to identify it as a singular item.

Where more common views were gathered within and across schools, these are noted in the analysis.

Analysis of Findings from the Interviews

One of the hardest things to discover in any research on the impact of training is the link between the training and the following action – the cause and effect link. In the analysis that follows, I am aware that some of the linkages are tenuous and many are only in the eyes of the staff involved in the interviews. To establish the validity of their perceptions is very difficult and can only be countenanced by a ready acquiescence to the idea that everyone has a view to express but not all of those

views will be valid. In the spirit of practitioner research, I present these findings with the caveat that this is only the starting point for an evaluation of the impact of this training programme.

One thing is clear from the view of all the Heads involved. They all believe that the LPSH has refocused them on their work as a Headteacher and even where it has not improved their skills or helped them in the task of headship, it has certainly given them the opportunity to reflect on their style and approach to the work of leading their school. The reader must make their own judgments about the value of the comments in this analysis and I leave it as open as possible given the constraints of writing a doctoral thesis.

A range of general comments come through the research and have been summarised under a number of generalised headings. These include:

- Delegating to improve staff morale and understanding;
- Facing the harsh reality of people's perceptions;
- Renewed energy and drive for change;
- Time for reflection;
- Accountability;
- Vision for the school;
- Leadership styles;
- Effectiveness; and finally,
- Limitations of the LPSH and its impact.

I shall take each of these in turn, using examples and quotations from the interviews to illustrate the points made.

In doing this, I have adopted a discursive style to take the reader through the findings in a logical and easy fashion. Some of the

conclusions are clear whilst others are left open to stimulate discussion or further debate as to the reliability of the individualised comments. Following this process, I have drawn together a set of conclusions that I believe come through the research with a series of additional questions for further consideration and more in-depth study on leadership training programmes, and those organised by government agencies in particular.

Delegating to improve staff morale and understanding

There is an apparent emphasis in the LPSH on shared values and ownership. This also links to delegated functions and devolved responsibilities, and accountabilities, given to staff. Linked to this is the drive for a greater appreciation by school leaders on the programme of the value of distributed leadership, expanding the concept of devolved responsibilities toward a team approach of distributed leadership. Whether these were considered valuable in the successful leadership of the school was not questioned by the Heads involved in the study. Each of the Headteachers received feedback on their level of effective leadership against a set of so-named (by the DfES, Hay Group and other governmental agencies) high performing school Heads. They were given feedback on the level at which effective Heads operate and their performance was measured against this standard. All of the Headteachers from the Case Study schools appear to have accepted this without question with no interviewee challenging the validity of the research that led to the final level of expected attainment set out in their feedback forms. Only one of the Headteachers (School E) gave any rationale for challenging the scores received and yet, even she did not challenge the original data set used as the benchmark.

The principles on effective school leadership as set out by LPSH were recognised and accepted by the respondents and seen as a positive way to further engage staff in the decision making processes at the

school. Many then linked this to increased staff motivation and higher degree of staff morale.

Overall, Heads felt that their relationship with staff had changed with a greater emphasis on praise for achievements. They also noted that they displayed greater involvement and awareness across the work of their school. The Heads believed that they had stepped out of the office and become more visible around school. Staff who may have felt that the Head had become 'detached' welcomed this change in style and commented on this in practice. It was felt that this had impacted on student behaviour and greater cohesion for the whole school in terms of consistency in application of strategies to deal with pupil indiscipline and achievement.

Some staff commented that they felt rewarded and valued by improved recognition in what Muczyk and Reimann (1987, see p.58 above) might refer to as the permissive democratic style. This had impacted on staff by lifting morale. Relationships had improved and new staff were more easily integrated into the ways of working in the school, being able to demonstrate their psychological maturity (Hersey and Blanchard, 1998, see p.60 above). Improved communication was cited in many responses with comments noting that they were all singing from the same song sheet. Staff commented on a feeling of greater engagement in the life of the school and its future direction. They felt more aware of and involved in whole school issues and were therefore able to add greater consistency in their work in the school with their renewed professional autonomy (Hargreaves, 1996).

The Heads noticed that there was a stronger sense of support from staff because they had an increased role in formulating change. The LPSH highlighted issues about followership and ownership that the Heads had

highlighted in their work back in school after the programme. This increased sense of ownership by staff helped engender a keener focus on the aims of the school and the long term vision for the future. From this came improved levels of trust of each other and more confidence to tackle key issues.

This was not a universally held view and criticism at one school was quite strong with issues over the structure, clarity of roles on the leadership team and lack of real decision-making powers:

“Some decisions I can’t make, because I don’t feel empowered to make decisions if the structure of our senior leadership teams were different, then we wouldn’t be fire fighting - we would be more pro-active. We would understand what was in the Head’s mind. We would be able to implement this in more effective way. So, I feel that sometime there is inefficiency there”.

(School A Deputy: Visit 1)

This view was echoed by a Middle Leader in the same school:

“There is a need for more communication, we don’t have an adequate communication structure in place we don’t have staff meetings, we have INSET days where the head makes introductory address, but it is one way communication no discussion...”

(School A Middle Leader: Visit 1)

Yet, even prior to the LPSH programme, the staff in the school felt that the Head *“has a very clear vision. We have actually discussed vision, we have discussed values at length...”* (School A Middle Leader: Visit 1). This comment recognises a move by the Head to improve the ownership of the vision making process with other members of staff. For this

school, perhaps, the distance between autocracy and democracy is far greater than in the other schools in the sample with the application of group decision making as expounded by Yetton (1973, see p.67 above).

Improved communications and meetings structures were noted as features following the Head's involvement in the LPSH programme. Staff felt part of a cohesive group and responded well to better dissemination of information. A close network had been established in leadership teams to share and deal with issues as well as supporting one another.

A similar view was expressed at School C regarding improvements in communication with staff at all levels. Staff commented that the Head is more comfortable with her leadership and more open and reflective to others peoples' ideas. This had led to feelings of increased value among staff emphasized by the openness. Staff were aware of their personal traits, good points and areas for development. There was a feeling that the school was operating more cohesively. However, concern was expressed that the decision making process did not always filter right the way down the staff – ideas were identified but not always adopted. Therefore staff did not have ownership of the decisions and were less enthusiastic about their implementation:

“...sometimes you don't feel as enthusiastic about those decisions because they haven't come from you.... there is an awful lot of people that have a lot of ideas but may never express them because they don't feel able to...”

(School C Reception Teacher: Visit 1).

Perhaps this can be rationalised as a difficulty of Heads who do not always recognise the valuable input from other staff and their failure to

recognise that one school leader cannot lead all aspects of the school (see Macbeath and Oduro, 2000, mentioned on p. 48 above).

Whilst there was a feeling that more responsibility has been devolved at School C, one interviewee comments that although there is some improvement, there is still a reluctance to delegate important tasks. They interpret this as a lack of trust in their ability, but there is acknowledgement that it might be due to her accountability to the Governors. However, more delegation and consequent accountability would be welcomed.

School C staff comment that they are encouraged to be more self critical and more concerned to maintain high standards. The curriculum had been enhanced because staff had the confidence to deviate from the given scheme of work, originally set up by the Head, (sometimes referred to in schools as the programme of study) where it was felt to be of value.

In addition to greater levels of communication, the quality of relationships (see Cardonna, 2000 and Bass and Avolio, 1990, 1994) was also highlighted as a key feature since the Head returned from the course. This is expressed by the reception teacher who commented that *“there seemed to be a lot of telepathy in school; that there were certain things done without our knowledge”* (School C Reception Teacher: Visit 1). Since attending the course, this respondent noted that there were more formal opportunities to ensure that people knew what was going and *“there have been increased meetings where certain issues have been discussed that weren’t before.”* (School C Reception Teacher: Visit 1).

At School E, the Deputy felt that the Head was “*trying to become more relaxed*” whilst a more comprehensive analysis was provided by one of the teachers:

“... she provided a few more opportunities now for ... the staff to say what they think of the school, where they think things are going, what changes they’d like to make...”

(School E Deputy Head,: Visit 1)

In addition to this, there was a strong sense of increased visibility and support from the Head to all staff. One of the teachers noted this as a positive feature since she returned from the course:

“she seems to be trying to spend a bit more time up and down the corridors just chatting to people, trying to build relationships with people and trying to show people that she is aware of what going on in the their lives apart from just work and school, I’ve seen that as well.”

(School E Teacher a: Visit 1)

This can be seen as a shift along the Tannenbaum and Schmidt continuum (1958) from task-based instruction towards collective decision-making (see p. 56 above).

Facing the harsh reality of people’s perceptions

Ancona (2003) identified effective leaders through comparison of good leaders against bad leaders (see p.49 above). In a similar way, we can see the application of one of the most important features of the LPSH is the 360 degree appraisal scheme used to measure the leadership qualities of the Headteacher participants. The process comes from the Hay McBer work on leadership competencies and measures the responses by the Headteacher and a selection of 5 other staff in the

school. These are then matched against the responses of high performing Headteachers as judged by Hay McBer. More information and comment on this process is included in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. Dealing with the feedback from the questionnaires can be easy if the feedback is all positive. However, when negative feedback is received, or feedback that contradicts the Headteacher's own view of their leadership qualities, then this can cause stress and unease for the participants. In the interviews, all participants made some comment on the difficulty of this process either for themselves or for their colleagues where their own feedback was positive.

The participants recognised that they were required to deal with comments about their style, manner and effectiveness in their work. These come through as a personal criticism of the Heads by their staff and in some cases were hard to accept. They recognised that it was difficult to hear things about themselves that were not always positive or did not always reflect their own view of staff perceptions. We are here reminded that leadership is a construct in the mind of the follower (Meindl, 1992, see p.42 above).

One Head recognised that he was not as popular as he might like and does not "*do as other people would like*". (School A Head: Visit 1)

At School B, the Head is described by her staff as being highly competent, open and empathetic, extremely good at people management and highly organised. She is supportive of her staff and empowering. Whilst they recognised that this can be a painful experience, they recognised the process as a valuable one. The Head was open to feedback and took a relaxed view:

“... I think I am stronger and more experienced to be able to take criticisms, if you see them as criticisms; they are not criticisms, they are just perceptions of people”.

(School B Head: Visit 1)

At School C, the Head found the feedback from the 360° quite difficult to confront but has worked on the areas for development both personally and with her new senior team. This was a clear indication of the impact of the course on her way of working, reminding her that leadership cannot be divorced from followership and that the perceptions of both have validity in determining the effectiveness of the leadership of the Head (Shackleton, 1995, see p.42 above):

“The whole thing is quite scary; you are actually confronting yourself or other people. The interesting thing from the feedback was I thought I was better than they did. That was a big lesson.”

(School C Head: Visit 1).

When I returned for the second visit, this was still very dominant in her mind. She stated early in the interview that “the big thing for me was the 360”. Whilst recognising the difficulty in accepting that her own view of how she was working was not as favourably perceived by her staff as she had thought, she did not shy away from taking steps to alter her style.

Comparing her view with others, she accepted that:

“...the actual reality of it is probably a bit different and I think that to me was difficult to cope with. Some of the things were quite hard but I think I have worked on that and instead of it being very negative, it became very positive.”

(School C Head: Visit 2).

As a result of this, the roles of staff have been more clearly defined, teamwork has improved and there has been more effective mentoring of staff as a result. She has used the experience with her staff and has made them undergo a similar self-review process:

“... she has had to really look at herself and her methods and now she is encouraging us to do the same. We have had to fill in these forms to work out what kind of teaching style we choose and all these different things to do with our personality traits and where we are within the team so we are all aware of what our good points are and weaknesses.”

(School C Teacher a: Visit 1).

The idea of reflection on her own practice appears to have been quite strong in that the Head has encouraged this process with her own staff. They have recognised the process that she has undergone and are positive about her openness and the fact that she wants their help to develop as a leader:

“it has made her question certain aspects of her leadership, which I don’t think she did before and I think that she has been open about those and she has discussed it with all the staff...”

(School C Teacher b: Visit 1).

The LPSH course placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of choosing the right style in the right context, and making sure that participants were aware of a range of styles that could be used in different settings (for example, see Likert, 1967; Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 2000). This challenges the view of Fiedler (1967) by emphasising the view that it is possible to change your leadership style in different situations (see page 65 above). This emphasis on choosing the relevant style required participants to think about the best style to use. The course does not prescribe styles specific to particular situations. Instead, it presents a range of different styles and asks the participants to consider the impact of those styles and the balance of styles that they use in the leadership of the school. Generally, this was appreciated by the Heads as being a useful part of the language of leadership. This was well presented by the Head of School D who also acknowledged the value of study of leadership styles:

“... the six leadership styles and the need for a different style at different points in your organisation of the team you’re leading have been very useful. We have done quite a lot with people taking up a new post and the sort of style they might want at that point and what they are working towards to maintain in a more sophisticated style.

(School D Head: Visit 2)

The Head of School E says that the accent on styles ‘really made me think’ and was a top-up of previously learned strategies, although some of the feedback was painful:

“The authoritative leadership style was the one that I was really low on in term of the staff’s views whereas I thought I was good at it and that really did bother me because I thought this is why I have come into this job and if I am not doing that then, it really did rock my whole perception of how I was operating and the messages that I was giving out.”

(School E Head: Visit 2)

She feels that LPSH has enabled her to move on in her personal development. She has interpreted criticisms as things to be done differently and sees her role with a new perspective, moving away from a directive style towards a more collective approach that Kotter (1996) might interpret as a shift from management to leadership (see p.28 above). The Head has shared her analysis with her Deputy and explained that she was deflated after LPSH. However, some features were kept to herself:

“I shared the leadership styles one with the Deputy, with the rest of the staff I talked about it in more broad terms, the climate one I shared with everybody who had given that feedback, but to be honest the leadership styles one hurt and I didn’t particularly want to share it with anybody.”

(School E Head: Visit 1)

There was some criticism of the way that feedback was given during the course. This was particularly pertinent for the Head of School E who had some tough feedback to consider:

"I thought that it was pretty awful because, in a time where you need a bit of space for personal reflection, in sitting in a room where you were so close to someone that even if you tried to not look at theirs you couldn't avoid it. I don't think it should be done publicly."

(School E Head: Visit 1)

On the second visit, the Head of School E was still concerned about the feedback and its impact:

"One of my colleagues was so upset by her feedback that she gave up teaching and I found that quite upsetting that she'd got to that stage and thinking that what she was doing was OK and it really did hurt her so much. It did me to begin with."

(School E Head: Visit 2)

She felt that the commitment to the course was essential as well as the process of reflecting on the feedback and clarifying what it is really telling you. She pointed out that criticisms do not have to be negative and after talking with her staff, she recognised that they were trying to be constructive in their feedback:

"It was only when I talked through with staff and the initial feedback that I realised that what I was taking as a criticism, they weren't implying in that way. There was something that they wanted me to do differently but in many ways the way that I operate, and still do to a certain extent, gives them the stability that they want."

(School E Head: Visit 2)

Despite her reservations about sharing the information with other members of staff, they felt that this had given a positive outcome for the Head:

"I think it was finding out about yourself ... because most people think they know themselves, I think that if you actually go to something that is very deep ... you start actually thinking: 'Ok, all these years I thought I was that kind of person, perhaps I am not really' ... I think she found it very useful and certainly it was an eye opener... being involved in these things you do learn new things about yourself."

(School E Senco: Visit 1)

Renewed energy and drive for change

LPSH had re-energised participants, giving them more confidence to reassert their status and retrieve strategies previously learnt but not used for some time. This higher level of confidence in the Head has impacted on staff in terms of their understanding of the future needs and direction of the school. For many it was a very positive, if sometimes painful experience:

"It is probably one of the best things I have ever done. Personally it was good but it was incredibly challenging and I felt like I was one of those butterflies that was pinned to a wall, totally on display."

(School E Head: Visit 1)

The programme had refreshed dormant skills in some of the Headteachers. Staff feel they are in safe hands, will be supported and have greater feeling of 'togetherness'. Having created the climate for change, there has been a rise in creative thinking. Improved

consultation with staff has brought about several recent changes in expectation and performance.

At School B, a benefit of the course was to remind the Head of the range of leadership skills that she possessed but had not used for some time and which were now required to deal with different staff in a different context. As was the case for the School A Head, it enabled her to strengthen these skills. She also came to recognise the personal qualities and potential she possessed. Members of School B staff recognised this increased focus and the challenges of bringing the staff of the two schools together recognising the need to adapt to a changing situation (Anderson, 1990, see p. 66 above):

"I think since (the LPSH course), she has had to put infinitely more thought into it, you know, sharpen up slightly around the edges to cope with the tremendous challenge she has got this year ... I think the fact that she has done it is down to her but I think also focussing her mind on the different things we were asked about, maybe have helped her even more."

(School B Deputy: Visit 1)

Attention towards raising standards of behaviour has included the employment of a 'Bullying Tsar' and a change to the organisation of the school day from a 7 period day to a 5 period day with a split lunch break. This is welcomed as a positive step at School A to reduce disruption during the day and separate students at lunchtime. At School B, the junior school inherited by the Head had 'serious weaknesses'. Behavioural problems and disaffection in the older children had to be confronted and resolved. There has been a recent OfSTED and the school is now deemed as being a Good School. OfSTED comments that behaviour was "Very Good". Both schools faced similar issues yet

one was primary, the other secondary. The experience of mixed phase groups for delivery of the LPSH appears to have positive benefits as, in the words of one of the Heads, the issues are similar –whether between state or independent, primary or secondary, urban or rural. However, it would be wrong to generalise at this stage and without further investigation into the value or otherwise of mixed phase or separate phase training, this perception lacks reliability.

The Head at School A believes that it is not possible to establish whether any change in academic standards has resulted in his attendance on the LPSH. Indeed, the indicators from GCSE results show the opposite. He explains this drop in the context of a decline in the school profile of students' attainment on entry. The school population reflects changing local socio-economic trends and he cannot define any causality between LPSH and student attainment. This ties in with the view of Hallinger and Heck (1999) who recognise that quality of leadership can only account for three to five percent of variation in student attainment (Hallinger and Heck, 1999).

The timing of participation on LPSH was felt to be an important factor in determining its success. The Head of School D believes that whilst *"there were some interesting things in it ... it would have been better to have done it, for me personally in say year 3 or 4."* (School D Head, Visit 1). She felt this because she was already an experienced Head and had been forced to resolve any issues that had come to her through her own resources and other contacts. If the course had been earlier in her headship, the co-coaching model may have been of greater value during the period of her getting to understand different ways of operating as a school leader.

There was no doubt that the Head of School C had been influenced positively by the LPSH and especially in the way that she copes with change noting that she was “not so afraid of change” and that she was relying more on her leadership qualities rather than simply managing processes and tasks:

“We have done quite a lot of change and I’m not so afraid of it. I am using my Senior Management Team much more and we have many more meetings and I retire next July but it’s their school and the leadership is definitely that way rather than from the top now.”

(School C Head: Visit 2).

She was delegating more and encouraging change led by her senior team. She was also preparing for her retirement and engaging in succession planning as an offshoot of her time reflecting on the course.

Time for reflection

There is no doubt that the LPSH, by taking the Head out of the school context and making them look at the feedback from the 360° appraisal alongside peers was a great opportunity for reflection. Whether this would have been equally valuable had the group met as part of an unstructured programme in a hotel for the same period of time has not been put to the test. However, this opportunity to look at one’s own performance was welcomed and seen as a positive feature of the course.

At School A, the Head felt that the LPSH provided an opportunity for him to reflect on the way in which the school functions, his own practices and those of his staff at a crucial point in his headship where he needed to refocus his vision for the school:

“You do a bit of kind of re-engineering, I suppose there is a natural cycle there, where you feel competent and confident you have the ability to stop and reflect through this kind of programme...”

(School A Head: Visit 1)

He welcomed the opportunities to sound out ideas with other heads, discuss areas of concern, and gain reassurance that they faced similar problems. He used the LPSH course as a means of sharpening his focus:

“... it has enabled me to reflect even more on the practice that I have here and indeed my own practice and that of other people throughout the school, of course it means with a group of 12 or so other heads you are able to bounce information off each other, there has been quite a reality change as well on occasions because I do have reasonable network of local people and beyond, but to hear that they have got the same problems in Tyne on Wear or Middlesbrough or whatever and there actually much worse in some ways we are all dealing with the same kind of things but to different extents is always helpful as well.”

(School A Head: Visit 1)

He is quite clear that he wanted to use the LPSH co-coaching group to help formulate his ideas and firm up his strategies for improvement in the school:

"I wanted to test it by people who didn't know the school. They were able to come up with all sorts of thoughts which I was able to use or reject or modify or whatever before I came to the staff. So it was a very useful sounding board. I think if I had gone away with local heads it wouldn't have been the same."

(School A Head: Visit 1)

From the interview with the School A Head, the impression was gained that whilst there seemed a reluctance from the Head to embrace the LPSH programme, the course had given him permission to reflect on his leadership in terms of the whole school community and not just his senior staff. Some of his ideas were re-formed as a result of interaction with the LPSH group:

"...it was in my thoughts before I started on the LPSH pilot but it kind of firmed up my thinking because I was able to work in that forum with ... my co-coaching group of 4 or 5 other heads who were able to give feedback at headship level, which I wouldn't have got otherwise - unless I had gone to my local network. So it was quite helpful to refine and shape."

(School A Head: Visit 1)

He also recognised that other members of the group gained from their collective expertise:

"....she has actually learnt a lot from advice that we have been able to give her about using ICT."

(School A Head: Visit 1)

The perceived reticence and suggested slightly aggressive style that was evident in the first interview appeared to be lessening on the

second visit. He appears now to be more open and sharing of himself and the school is benefiting.

At School B, the Head also felt that she was able to help other members of the group:

“in the groups we worked in with LPSH I was also able to help some of the other heads, less experienced than maybe myself, thinking about their problems.”

(School B Head, Visit 2).

She also asserted that the LPSH was personally confidence boosting with the group interaction supporting her view:

“I think LPSH gave me a lot of self-confidence because working as closely with that group of people I actually realised that I had some very good qualities. It sounds as if I’m bragging but I realised that I was doing very well.”

(School B Head, Visit 2).

The value of working with a national group was recognised by the Head of School A as well as School B:

“You work in local groups but normally because you are working on a strategy you have particular tasks to do. You don’t really get down to the nitty-gritty of what my local heads are thinking or how they work in their schools. LPSH was probably my first group of heads where we used to really pull apart our workings in school, how we thought we were managing and what our problems were and how to help each other with our problems”.

(School B Head, Visit 2).

This recognition of a deeper level of debate and understanding gave greater value to the programme. She claims that it re-energised her for the challenges brought about by an amalgamation that required the integration of additional teachers and junior school students into her school where existing staff were very familiar with her style and working practices. One of the important values of the programme, it would seem, is the process of debate and reflection and the analytical measures used to really focus on the role of the Headteacher as leader.

The Deputy Head at School B states that since LPSH, the Head has put infinitely sharper focus into the leadership of the whole amalgamated school. Another member of staff says that the Head has become more strategic in her thinking and is now listening to more diverse opinions and is more reflective than she used to be. There is also a perception that the Head has become more authoritative. The Head does acknowledge that the intense self evaluation and personal reflection that are central to the programme have allowed her to work on areas which were perhaps not so well developed. For example, she had not focussed sufficiently on planning the strategic direction of the school as noted by some of her colleagues. The course had reminded her of this need.

At School D, the Head comments that she was already aware of much of the content of LPSH and for her it was not a dramatic piece of training. Many of the strategies in LPSH are already in place in her school. The relationships within the senior team are good, 360° evaluations are done and she is content that she uses her range of leadership skills effectively – skills which have matured with experience in the post. However, the course provided a valuable time-out opportunity for reflection and analysis.

Accountability

The Head of School A recognises that he does not hold staff sufficiently to account for their individual performance and that of the school. Exam results have dipped dramatically, a situation that was not predicted. Despite this, his leadership style is to prefer cordial relationships with staff and students which he believes are part of the ethos of his school. His staff felt differently and acknowledged the change in making staff accountable:

“I think he is becoming a bit harder with staff, I think after the GCSE results came out, he was obviously very disappointed by those. . . . more willing to confront poor performance, plus it’s the first time that he really had to do that.”

(School A Middle Leader: Visit 1)

In School C, the Head was concerned about what was meant by accountability on the course and commented that there was such a high expectation:

“I find that really difficult to understand what they mean...It’s the one that they had to score almost perfect scores to.”

(School C Head: Visit 1)

She decided that it was about having a *“willingness to fire and pull people onto the carpet and give them a rollicking”*.

Ultimately, accountability was recognised as being different things to different people implying that the LPSH had not made this clear enough during the course of the programme. The Head of School E noted this variation in interpretation in the first visit:

“... it is difficult to separate accountability and blame in people’s view. We have been working on the responsibility and flexibility side of climate and its very difficult to encourage people to take risks and say, well you are accountable for it without saying but you will be blamed if it goes wrong, because that’s how people feel, I don’t think it is because I make them feel like that its just the general climate in education. You feel that if you don’t toe the line you get hammered.”

(School E Head: Visit 1)

She appears here to be justifying the reason why she did not score highly in accountability because her staff were unwilling to take risks for which, if things went wrong, they would be held liable. She was using elements of attribution theory (Meindl, 1992 and Meindl and Ehrlich, 1987, see p. 76 above) to lay blame elsewhere, on external forces rather than accept that she had the power to control the work of the staff which, I argue is one of the key features of the LPSH. The course does not address issues of rationalisation of the process of feedback. This is a good example of where the Head has justified a negative feedback and thereby allowed herself not to have to make any changes in the way that she holds people to account.

On the contrary, for the School B Head, accountability was identified as an area for development and LPSH has acted as a catalyst for action. She remarks that the deep thinking and target setting from LPSH has enabled accountability to be an outcome:

"I think it's made me think that by doing what I had planned to do and by really deeply thinking about that area, I will get movement on the accountability. So, it's not made me do the actual activities but it has made me think that by doing these activities, I will be making everyone more accountable."

(School B Head: Visit 1)

This shift, however subtle, was reflected in the views of one of her staff who noted that:

"... in the last 6 months she has changed slightly in as much as, not with every member of staff but where it is needed, she has become a bit hard - is not the right word - but she has become a bit more authoritarian - just slightly, nothing too dreadful but just a bit I would say."

(School B Teacher: Visit 1)

In School B, a middle leader recognised that the Head was "*trying to be a bit more forceful with things*" (School B Middle Leader: Visit 1). The staff interviewed felt she was a good leader and had responded well to the challenges of the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools into one primary. It was difficult to determine whether the differences that they had seen about her taking a more thoughtful and more strategic approach were as a result of her participation in LPSH or issues arising from the amalgamation:

"...when the amalgamation happened (the Head) tried really hard to make that as easy as possible for everybody, because there are quite a few difficulties amalgamating two schools."

(School B Teacher: Visit 1)

This more forceful approach was also recognised by the Head on the second visit. No longer could she rely on the more “cosy” atmosphere that she had created in the infant school. With a larger staff, less cohesion and more challenging behaviour from staff and students, she had to develop a new style aligned to path-goal theory as expounded by House (1971, see p. 71 above):

“Being here for a long time there’s a tendency to think, well it’s too cosy and there are times when that coercive element still has to come through because that’s what I get paid for.”

(School B Head, Visit 2).

She was aware that she was being required to act differently and make staff more accountable within the newly amalgamated school:

“For example, we’ve been reviewing our long term planning and the staff have had six months and non-contact time and reminders and in some cases management allowances to do it and when one person missed that deadline, although I was quite direct in what I said and she didn’t like it, I felt that I was justified.”

(School B Head, Visit 2).

Accountability had been set at a very high level on the feedback form scale. The five-point scale placed the target between level four and level five. Many of the respondents commented about the need for accountability and appeared, from the quotations above, to have tried to improve the level of accountability imposed on their staff. If we accept that calling people to account is a high level requirement of highly-effective Headteachers, then it is quite clear from the responses that this has been accepted and will be acted upon by the participants. Consequently, it can be deduced that this area had made an impact on

the way that these Headteachers were planning to change their working practices. However, making a commitment to embrace the change is not the same as actually doing it and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the intentions had been put fully into practice.

Vision for the school

The course raises the importance of setting out and communicating the vision for the school as a prime feature of effective leadership. The extent to which the Heads of the case study schools demonstrated this was variable but they all accepted that this was an important task of high performing Headteachers. Once more, participants did not question this principle, perhaps because they agreed with the emphasis on vision established on the course or perhaps because they had simply not felt it was necessary to challenge the notion.

The Head of School A was already working on developing a particular aspect of work in the school but he claims that the LPSH helped to sharpen his edge in this. He has formulated an acronym 'PRIDE' with which he is very pleased. This stood for Progress, Respect, Interest, Discipline and Enthusiasm:

"it just sharpened my focus ... rearticulating perhaps a vision for the school."

(School A Head: Visit 1)

Not all staff are as enthusiastic as he is about this and one member of staff interviewed could not remember what it stood for. Nevertheless, he felt that this had been a result of attending the course alongside his motive to re-focus on the core values of the school.

The Head of School E was brought to realise that she was not sharing enough of her vision with the staff:

“One of the things that I realise through LPSH that I wasn’t doing, I wasn’t sharing the vision enough, because it is so ingrained in me and its what makes me get up every morning, it wasn’t something that I spouted.”

(School E Head: Visit 1)

She then went on to explain that vision and was passionate about how she expressed it:

“I want the children here to have the best possible experience for if they can and they just mean that they leave us being able to read and write and do number work, its everything that makes children enjoy this part of their school life and want to go on and develop in the future. When I see them in the juniors and I think we played a part in that and for the staff that they get the best out of themselves. I have got people here who have been teaching a long time and people who have just come into teaching, its this feeling that you enjoy doing your job because it’s worthwhile and you can feel the benefits.”

(School E Head: Visit 1)

LPSH helped her to reinforce her vision for the school and encouraged improved communication and more discussion than previously. She says that she has come to realise the impact the Head has on other people, is now more aware of how individual staff are likely to react and therefore more thoughtful about her approach. A member of staff says that the Head has used new ways of analysing issues and encourages staff to make contributions. She goes on to describe the Head as more open and confident in consultations yet does not make it clear about the

final act of decision-making. Taking account of the views of Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958), she should ensure that whilst staff want to be consulted, they do not want to make the final decisions (see p. 56 above).

The Head of School D was identified by more than one member of staff as being “visionary” describing her as having:

“a very clear vision of education in its widest sense and how that could be realised in a secondary school. She is a very effective communicator and has managed in a what was a very difficult amalgamation to pull together some quite disparate communities and unite them behind a common vision and make sure that that is absolutely clear, so communication and vision, I think one thing that she is absolutely superb at is keeping above just the day to day management which she also does very effectively but never losing track of the longer term objectives and I think that is very difficult to do in a senior or particular headship when you have got so many things flying at you. “

(School E Deputy Head: Visit 1)

The concept of keeping everything in balance and holding on to the vision was commented on by the Head of School E who, having managed to secure an unsatisfactory rating in this area, she accepted that she had “ *to keep juggling so many things at the same time and sometimes that gets in the way of the important stuff*” (School E Head: Visit 1).

Leadership styles

The Head of School A claims that he is not interested in the theory of leadership styles. He states that he cannot employ styles with which he is not comfortable and, in this respect, he does not seem receptive to the challenge for change embodied within the LPSH programme. It would appear that he has aligned himself with Fiedler's view that leadership styles are more difficult to change than situational factors. Perhaps, then, this Head is making a case for him changing schools due to his inability to change to meet the needs of his existing school environment (see p. 63 above). He appears content with his repertoire of styles that he believes work for him. Nevertheless, he does confess that it made him *"realise I had a variety (of styles) in the repertoire and it gave me a bit more confidence I suppose to know when to use those, so it was heightening awareness"* (School A Head: Visit 2).

Contrary to this is the view at School D where the Deputy recognises that the whole area of leadership styles has become a big issue in the school, impacting on performance management:

"I think one thing that she has changed and sorted has ... is the kind of different approaches to leadership and the different leadership styles.... filtering down from senior team into middle management is a lot more thinking about the different styles of leadership and different approaches that you should adopt in different scenarios and I think that (she) has thought personally herself about that and she has certainly made all the senior team think about it a great deal actually and that's now just beginning to kind of percolate down to middle management, both in terms of performance management and things that (she) said ..."

(School D Deputy, Visit 1).

On the first visit, the School B Head did not feel the need to change her style of leadership believing that she is conscious of the use of different approaches in different tasks and that she is effective in the way she operates:

"I don't think they would see that I have changed at all, because I don't particularly want to change my working, because I have been quite successful in the ways that I do things, I do try to do different approaches in different things that I do, otherwise life becomes boring."

(School B Head, Visit 1)

On the second visit, however, she recognised that the different challenge she has at her school has required a different set of styles and the LPSH helped her select from a wider range of ways of dealing with different people. She has applied contingency theory (see pages 36-41 above) to her practice and recognised that she is now in a different context that requires a different approach:

"...when I went on LPSH, which was virtually at the beginning of the amalgamation, it actually highlighted me to the different styles that I could be using in some of situations and, some of the things, I definitely didn't like what was happening so I did have to use a different style and say to people 'I'm sorry, but that's just not on', which I hadn't done for years and years."

(School B Head, Visit 2).

This was not the view of the Deputy Head who felt that she had always displayed effective leadership and that the changes alluded to by the Head were not as evident as the Head may have felt:

"I think that when I first came here, I was very impressed with her leadership qualities and I have not noticed any real dramatic changes, but then again I think her approach to leadership and management is very consistent and I think you always know it's not erratic, you always know where you stand and what's what. I've not really seen any changes."

(School B Deputy Head, Visit 2)

One of the particular benefits of the course for the Head of School E was the analysis of leadership styles and personal traits. Reflection on her leadership has reinforced who she is – the same person but now able to relax a little, reassured by staff that she is doing OK and not seen as a soft touch. She has shared this information with teaching and non-teaching staff in an INSET session. She reported back that staff at her school commented that they felt comfortable with the her coercive style despite the apparent view presented through the LPSH course that this style is not as effective in the long term as other, more open and democratic styles:

"Coercive comes out as very negative but they couldn't see it like that, they did say that one of the things that was important to them was that they could kind of rely on me to make the difficult decisions and that was something that they didn't want me to stop doing, they wanted me to be the one who made the final decision. They said that."

(School E Head: Visit 1)

Once more, she appears to be trying to rationalise the negative feedback that she has received from the course and making it sound as if it is what her staff want.

They also recognised how she was changing in her approach and delegating more to other members of staff taking on board a shift along Lashway's (2006) continuum from bureaucratic executive towards humanistic facilitator (see page 38 above):

"... she has been giving more responsibility to different people in the school and she is expecting people to make more decisions which perhaps she wasn't before or she was trying to do before but it didn't come across like that. There has been definite change in that area."

(School E Deputy: Visit 1)

Not only was she seen to be delegating more, but she was also developing a more affiliative style through showing an interest in her staff beyond their school roles:

"she seems to be giving more consideration to people's feelings and what they have got to say and helping them with decisions and trying to work on ways of communication, she is trying to find ways to deal with those things and becoming a bit more approachable."

(School E Deputy: Visit 1)

This appears to have been a deliberate strategy to move away from the view held by staff of her dominant, coercive style and to develop a more holistic set of styles, including the affiliative.

At School D, the Head has used the LPSH categories of leadership styles to support a common language across the school and incorporated this work into the performance management discussions:

"I have done work on those 6 styles of leadership with all the leadership team and we have now looked at that for middle management so one of the discussions at performance management for leadership team middle management will be about understanding the 6 styles, this is not in an analytical level like the questionnaire but thinking which do you feel are your dominant styles and which you need to work at in different circumstances."

(School D Head: Visit 1)

Effectiveness

For the School A Head, one outcome of the self evaluation was to underline his confidence in his own abilities. From his feedback, he recognised that he needed to work on pace setting and to work on the process of the vision for the school. This was an important part of his development in Headship. He recognised that if he was going to remain in post, then he had to change to keep a fresh approach to school improvement:

"If people are going to stay in headship for a longer period of time instead of moving schools, in the same school they still need to look at re-engineering or re-thinking how things are going."

(School A Head: Visit 1)

These were important factors if he were to gain the support of his school community. At School A, there appear to be some members of staff, outside the senior team, who are not yet, either intentionally or otherwise, fully engaged in whole school issues. Improved communication remains an area for further work. Nevertheless, there is a perception that the school is working more collaboratively and responding to the ideas of others:

"I would say that I get a feeling that people's individual contribution is being recognised at a very individual level so when we have done something good, you feel maybe, that it has been picked up on and they have been given the opportunity to do something useful".

(School A Main scale teacher: Visit 2)

Standards at School B are high but the Head has redefined the way in which assessments are done to make them more effective. This enables results to be compared year on year and discussions to take place with staff in order to identify where improvements can be made. The Head is very analytical and she has high expectations of her staff shifting her approach from instructional to achievement-orientated in terms of Path-Goal theory (House, 1971, see p.71 above) .

Limitations of the LPSH and its impact

The general view of participants is that the course has been worthwhile. This is summed up well by the Head of School E:

"There were bits about it that none of us liked in terms of organisation but the rationale behind it, I don't think anyone has come away from it without feeling that it wasn't worth it and that shows because no-one dropped out."

(School E Head: Visit 1)

The key question is whether any changes or developments would have happened without the participants undertaking the course. One Head remarked that *"there are things that would have happened regardless, so I think the actual difference to me is reasonably small but that may not be the perception of other people."* (School A Head: Visit 1). He was here referring to the increased amount of work on monitoring and

evaluating the school's effectiveness. This was his way of improving the accountability of teachers to deliver improved exam results. Indeed, other staff in his school did comment on their understanding of the changes in his style and approach (see page 156).

It is ambiguous as to whether the change in approach to staff is as a result of the LPSH or the poor GCSE results.

Respondents identified a need to have relevant experience in the job to get the most out of the course. For those who had been in post for five or more years, they felt that this was not an issue although they did question whether those heads who had only been in post a short time would achieve much from this type of programme. The Head of School B believed that the impact was greatest on those with least experience. As a successful Head, she did not feel that the impact on her was as great as that of her LPSH group:

"...some less experienced people or people that had got quite a bit of differential in thinking on the graphs, it's led them into new ways of thinking and I could see real success with the course in them... less dramatic for me, maybe than some of the other heads."

(School B Head: Visit 1)

Here, the Head refers to the graphic representation of performance on a line graph. This showed where the Head was performing against so-called "high-performing" heads. Graphs were also used to indicate the performance of the Head through their own self-review compared to the performance of the Head as perceived by their staff chosen to take part in the 360° review.

As mentioned earlier, the timing of the programme was expressed by the Head of School D (see page 153). She felt that successful Heads really did not need this type of course because they were already successful. She gave the impression that she had covered much of the ground. She maintained the view that the course should be undertaken earlier in the career cycle of the Head although she did recognise that it had still had a positive impact on her:

"I am glad I did it. At the time I was perhaps a bit, not exactly cynical because it didn't in an obvious way teach me a lot. It's been reflecting on it and analysing some of the things we were doing that I think we would have done anyway but I think we have done them better."

(School D Head: Visit 2)

Whilst there was no identifiable improvement in standards where high standards were already the expectation, there was a general view that there was a higher degree of confidence within the institution to tackle key issues in a more strategic way:

"We had an OfSTED in the summer and we were deemed as a Good school. So I just feel that we have come on leaps and bounds from where it was at two years ago and whether I can put that down to LPSH, or whether it has been me, that I could see that I needed to be using different strategies, LPSH definitely reminded me of those strategies."

(School D Head: Visit 2)

No examples of evidence were given that the staff had noticed that LPSH had improved student performance. This was not considered to be a surprise in the light of the work of Hallinger and Heck (1999, see page 24 above). However, the improved communication, determination

to sort out problems and more open and honest relationships had lifted morale and this was recognised by staff.

In School A, for example, a main scale teacher believes that standards “have risen, there is a big feel of we are going somewhere” (School A Main Scale Teacher: Visit 2). A similar “feeling” is expressed in School E where the Deputy Head states quite categorically that:

“Our standards have risen, with our EMAS children as well. We’ve actually been given funding because they have risen and that is the leadership of (the Head) and the way she puts things to us through meetings. It’s the way she drives it forward. They have risen because of her.”

(School E Deputy Head: Visit 2)

Having made the statement, she did not attribute this directly to the LPSH programme and it would be hard to state firmly that standards have risen because of the Head’s attendance on the course. Yet, the Deputy Head made this statement knowing that it was the impact of LPSH that was the focus of my visit so there is an implied link in her comment.

Teachers were comfortable with their teaching and it was anticipated that this would impact on standards. There was a feeling that the standard of management and leadership had improved. Staff enjoyed their work more and the commitment to succeed was greater. One teacher mentioned improvements with children supported through EMAS (Ethnic Minority Advisory Service) following the successful application for additional funding.

An example was given by a Head who had resolved serious behavioural problems which had confronted her on a Key Stage 1-2 amalgamation.

For the Head of School D, there was some tension in her LPSH group and the mix of Heads was not conducive to rigour and challenge that she would have welcomed. She would have preferred to see a distinction between secondary and primary Heads groups:

“I would have like there to be a secondary phase experience because I think I would have found that more challenging and more rigorous and I did feel at times that I had to hold back quite a lot because I didn’t want to be intimidating.”

(School D Head, Visit 1).

Impact

It is difficult to assess the specific impact of one training programme on the work undertaken in the school by its leader. In School B, for example, the Head’s expertise and knowledge has been complemented by other training programmes undertaken before and since the LPSH and she is using her skills to support teachers and students in the wider community. This makes it difficult to assign developments to one particular training programme. Nevertheless, in the intervening period between the two visits, the emphasis on leadership skills has been valuable to the Head.

Staff in the case study schools found it difficult to assess the impact of the LPSH:

“It’s very difficult to quantify because it’s like seeing change or development in your own child when you are with them every day. One has this daily contact and therefore it’s difficult to assess.”

(School C Senior Teacher: Visit 2).

For the participants, the wider extent of the impact was not evident in the first interview, so soon after the course. The Head of School D, for example, had considered this prior to the first visit and had decided that she had found it useful, even though she seemed surprised at this:

“ I didn’t expect it to be, I thought it would be useful and as I say the time out to think is never hard, it is hard to find the time out to think.”

(Head of School D, visit 1)

The course served to bring to the fore existing skills which some had not used for some time and helped to recognise the qualities and potential they possessed.

By the time of the second interviews, one of the Heads did feel that the course had some impact, especially in the way she articulated what she was doing:

“I would have done some things anyway but I think I have done some specific things, and we have got into some terminology and some definitions that are specifically related to LPSH”.

(School D Head, Visit 2)

For the Head of School A, it was a similar experience. It was felt to be a more subtle change as seen by others:

“No one as ever said to me ‘oh you have changed after doing that course’. What it made me do is perhaps be more open with people about things that I was doing in my professional development, simply because I had to. They were invited to comment on my performance and so on, so again I wouldn’t say that the LPSH in itself

brought that change about but it just accelerated that process”.

(School A Head, Visit 2).

LPSH re-energised her for the challenges that lay ahead in integrating the very different cultures of teachers and students into her newly amalgamated school. The course helped her to apply a range of strategies to resolve issues of pupil behaviour and disaffection following amalgamation. The more recent OfSTED report commented that behaviour was very good. The recognition of this improvement particularly when the junior school had been in serious weaknesses demonstrated the impact she had made but cannot definitively ascribe those improvements to her attendance on the course. The LPSH introduced Heads to a group of colleagues doing a similar job who have been united in the provision of mutual support and opportunity for personal and professional development. The question here is whether similar changes to leadership practice would have taken place without the content of the course being delivered and simply providing Heads with a venue and an opportunity to discuss the needs of their own schools. The scope of this research was unable to pursue this point as there was no control measure as one of the case studies. Furthermore, it is difficult to measure the impact of this on tangible benefits for the students and staff in the school as a direct cause and effect link.

The Head's expertise and knowledge has been complemented by other training programmes. This is commented on by the Head of School B who has *“been on as many courses as you could possibly go on”*.

Similarly, the Head of School D points out that the LPSH was just one of many training programmes she has attended. She *“did an MA in the mid 80s”* which involved *“a lot on management and change, and the responses of people to change”* (School D Head Visit 1).

Whilst the Head of School A was very sceptical about the capability of this training programme to impact on improvements in his school, he felt that it was useful to a limited extent. He gave an impression that he was not willing to participate fully in the LPSH process whilst recognising that it came at the right time for him in that he had to move the school forward. He stresses the usefulness of the reflective aspects of the programme and the opportunities to interact with other heads.

The Head of School B remarked at the outset that the LPSH did not meet her training needs. However, it is clear from the perceptions of the staff that there has been a greater impact than she recognises. One member of staff remarks that she is aware that the Head is trying a variety of ways to get new staff to work in the way she wants. The LPSH has introduced the Head of School B to a group of other Heads who have been united in the provision of mutual support and opportunity for personal and professional development. The group is continuing to meet as a means of coaching and for their own personal development. The Head says that the coaching work with other LPSH colleagues has been valuable to bring back to her school. A similar view is expressed at School C noting that examples of good practice have been gained from contact with other schools within the Head's LPSH group with the school being very open to new initiatives and embracing change.

At School B, the Head recognised that she "...needed to be using different strategies. LPSH definitely reminded me of those strategies." (School B Head, Visit 2). One of the teachers recognised the openness of the Head in giving staff feedback on the LPSH course outcomes and this made it easier for them to see that "*some of the strategies that she is trying, you can see that she was trying to do that*", (School B Teacher:

Visit 1) noting the planned change in her style and using the ideas learned on the course:

“She was saying that she was trying to use some of the different leadership styles because she came up fairly highly in most of them. I can’t remember the two, but there were two that weren’t as high and she had been trying to implement them and we all said that we thought that they were actually quite negative ones compared to her natural style. You have to work with different people in different ways, don’t you?”

(School B Teacher: Visit 1)

There is criticism here of the course aims which set out to challenge participants to look at different leadership styles. The teacher has given feedback to the Head to declare that her “natural” style might be best although at the same time, recognising that different people require different approaches. The course is suggesting that she change this “natural” style which seems to be at variance with the views of her staff.

The Head of School C believes that she can identify that LPSH has had a definite impact on her leadership of the school and staff. The impact on her was so profound that she decided not to leave but to remain in post for a further two years because she wanted *“finish the job that was expected of me”* (School C Head: Visit 1).

She states that she is now more proactive as a direct result of the programme. It gave her the confidence to make an objective assessment of the state of the school, its staff and its performance. She claims that she is now more able to identify the need for improvement, implement change, and give impetus to initiatives which were necessary

but which had wavered. The ability to reassess her situation has impacted on the way that she sees the school. She is clear that it has given her “more energy” to tackle issues. She cites the restrictions on the budget as an example where she has battled with her Governors to secure a better deal for the school:

“The governors are not that supportive at the moment with money. It (LPSH) has given me more confidence to challenge that and accept that challenge, rather than crumble as I might have done ... They have been very good in making me stand back and assess different characteristics.”

(School C Head: Visit 1)

It would appear that the course has not just increased her knowledge of the styles and characteristics of leadership but has also improved her self-belief. This has encouraged her to have the confidence to challenge others because her feedback demonstrated that she was much better at some aspects of her work than she had previously thought.

As the Head of School C became more confident of calling her staff to account and more analytical following attendance on the course, so too have her staff. She believes that this positive impact has also had a benefit to the staff with a renewed energy and determination to maintain high standards.

Her staff also note the impact that the course has effected on her approach in school and the way that she is trying to influence staff to follow a self-reflective process:

"I said at the beginning about (her) being very aware of her weaknesses and I think that is possibly a result of this course."

(School C Reception Teacher: Visit 1)

One of her staff gives a clear message that, although it may be hard to quantify, one of her teachers, when asked if the Head had improved overall, said that, in his view, he was clear that this was the case:

"Gut reaction, yes, because I think she's been quite aware that she wanted to change and take on board whatever the content was of the course and improve her communication and the way she empowers her senior staff, everybody really, right down to the NQTs."

(School C Senior Teacher: Visit 2).

The Head of School E is definite that LPSH has had an impact on her leadership. She believes there is a continuing impact on her staff. In addition, the opinions of the children have also been canvassed through a survey, something that she believes has come out of LPSH.

A member of staff at School E comments that the Head has been prepared to take a fresh perspective on herself and staff are very aware of the impact of LPSH. The Deputy has watched her behaviour since attendance on the course and asserts that he has definitely noticed changes. He says that there is more delegation demonstrating a more consultative approach and staff are better informed about changes in the school:

"She has been giving more responsibility to different people in the school and she is expecting people to make more decisions which perhaps she wasn't before"

or she was trying to do before but it didn't come across like that, there has been definite change in that area".

(School E Deputy Head: Visit 1).

At School D, the impact of LPSH seems not to have been felt by staff lower down the school structure. However, the comments of the Deputy Head are revealing of the impact of LPSH on the Head. He believes that there has been a greater emphasis on motivation which has been shared throughout the senior team. This is claimed to have promoted a better understanding of the behaviour of staff. This knowledge has been used to good effect in Performance Management. Staff development was already very good but with the Head's greater confidence, there has been a noticeable improvement. This was despite the fact that the Head of School E played down the importance of the course in her development.

The Head at School E was adamant that she had *"always kept in mind the things that I wanted to do when I got back and the impact that it had had on me."* (School E Head: Visit 2). Of particular relevance was adopting a more collegiate style following feedback from the 360 degree review:

"I try as far as I can to involve people more in discussions about what we are going to do in school, to make them very aware of what the situations are and to ask what they think about things... I try to be as open as I possibly can in all my dealings with the staff and particularly in terms setting priorities for the school.

(School E Head: Visit 2)

This change in approach along the leadership style continuum as described by Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958, see page 56 above) was

noticed by other staff at the school. The Deputy Head pointed out that improvements in communication were clearly recognisable:

"We have more weekly notes now which I put up on the notice board in the staff room. Senior Management meetings as well, there has been more coming up through there, communication wise. From that, information is disseminated throughout the school."

(School E Deputy: Visit 2)

The important change that the Deputy had noticed was her approach to other members of staff and valuing their contributions:

"... whereas before if all of us disagreed with her decision it was 'no I want it this way'. I think she has changed, she's accepting other people's decisions and values and what they feel and she's taking them on board now... She is involving us more."

(School E Deputy: Visit 2)

This demonstrates a move towards a more collegiate approach where the views and opinions of others in the organisation are valued and encouraged in order to help her make the final decision. Such changes in the way that school leaders in this study operate in relation to their staff are good indicators of the impact of the LPSH to alter the leadership styles used by Headteachers in their different contexts.

The analysis of the interviews from the case studies highlights the changes that are possible on the leadership styles employed within school through a training programme designed to analyse and challenge previous thinking. The emphasis on moving along a coercive towards an authoritative and more consultative approach have clearly been evidenced although it has been much more difficult to analyse where Heads have maintained their existing styles because they worked effectively for their organisation. Whilst there are limitations on any

research in this field where perceptions form the main evidence base, the following section aims to draw together the underlying issues that have presented themselves and the conclusions and areas for further work that can now follow.

6. Conclusion

This investigation into the impact of the LPSH in challenging and, where necessary, changing the way that school leaders operate within their schools, in their own specific contexts, has demonstrated that there is sound evidence to show that school leaders can change their style of leadership in their schools. With such a small-scale research project, it is not possible to draw definitive outcomes but we are able to gather conclusions to inform further research into the impact of the LPSH on school leadership.

School Leadership training and development is a complex issue due to the nature of defining what is meant by leadership within the school context. Only when we have a clear understanding of the way a leader influences positive change in an organisation can an effective training programme be achieved. The review of the literature brings out some of the key elements in defining the role of the leader as a member of the broader organisation. If leaders fail to recognise the impact that they have on their subordinates and the power that their followers have in effecting the changes that they feel are required within the organisation, then it follows that the impact of the work of the leader will be less effective. Understanding the maturity of followers, their commitment and motivation and their willingness to take the lead from the Head in school, all impact on the effectiveness of achieving desired gains. Any school leadership training programme, therefore, has to ensure that participant Heads understand their role and the way that they can influence their staff. This is as much about process as content.

The LPSH tries to encapsulate a few key concepts of leadership particularly in terms of styles of leadership and the culture that then comes as a result of leader behaviour. However, it does not aim to

replicate the in-depth study of the range of leadership functions, styles and traits that can be gained from more intensive courses looking at these in depth. The limitations of the programme have to be recognised in that it is not possible to deal with the wealth of research and study into leadership in such a time-constrained course. The NCSL places the LPSH within a framework of leadership development and sees it as part of a series of programmes designed to offer aspirant and experienced Heads the opportunity to build up a body of knowledge on leading schools that goes far beyond the expectations of one course. It does not claim that the outcome of attendance will give participants the broader knowledge base to enable them to determine their particular way of leading against all of the different routes for effective leadership. Instead, it offers a route for participants to follow, based on the research of the Hay Group about effective school leaders as interpreted by various government agencies and the Hay Group itself. This, obviously, has its limitations and could lead participants to develop a single view of what is considered to be effective school leadership. The danger here is that there is not one type of effective leader, no single blueprint for a highly effective Head. Rather, participants need to remember that there is a wide range of attributes that need to blend together in different concentrations depending on the situation, the people and the requirements of the work at the time. It is this feature of the LPSH that does need to be emphasised.

None of the case study Heads were considered to be ineffective but each had something different to learn through the programme. This feature makes it difficult to determine a close cause and effect link between the training and the impact that this has made on the participants. Whilst the programme includes some content on leadership styles and organisational culture, it is also a leadership development programme designed to enable the participants to reflect

on their practice and modify that in the light of the course content, the interactions with their peers through the co-coaching groups and the school based development project. As the route through the programme will be different for each participant, it is only possible to draw generalised conclusion about the impact of LPSH in its role to improve the quality of school leadership by the Head.

The design of the course with this balance of content and process demonstrates that the NCSL has tried to incorporate a range of influences from prior studies and the theoretical perspectives. This has impacted on the way that the NCSL has approached the training of Headteachers . Perhaps the most dominant influences include that of contingency theory (see Fiedler 1967; Vecchio, 1987; Vroom and Yetton, 1973) and the work that has been undertaken by a number of researchers on leadership styles (such as Lewin et al., 1939; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958; McKenna, 2000).

As a model of leadership training, the LPSH presents a fair balance of prior understanding on leadership and uses the research of the Hay Group to attempt to match the skills and attributes of the course participants with a set of “effective” school leaders. There are flaws in the processes that have been used to identify these so-called effective Heads and there was, in my view, insufficient data to identify whether they were effective leaders or people in that position within an effective school. Furthermore, I do not believe that the NCSL or the Hay Group focussed sufficiently robustly on their definition of “effective” which could lead to some respondents gaining feedback against inaccurate benchmarks. An investigation into the selection of the Heads used for this benchmarking might prove to be beneficial in resolving this issue. If elements of bias as to the perceptions of these benchmark Heads have not been recognised, then the whole basis of the 360° analysis falls into

disrepute. None of the course participants challenged their rankings against this group and appeared by default to accept that the benchmarking was fair. However, there was no conclusive evidence to demonstrate this and it must therefore be an area of uncertainty in making judgements about the effectiveness of the course.

This said, the LPSH does appear to offer a high quality training programme in the eyes of those who have undertaken the course. There appears to be a consensus of views that the LPSH has given all participants in this study the opportunity to reflect on their styles of leadership and how they engage with their staff to develop the school as a more effective organisation. It falls short of identifying whether student performance outcomes have or can be improved as a result of these changes in leadership strategy. Indeed, it was never the intention of this research to state this as an outcome and has been repeatedly noted above that such links are hard to prove (see Hallinger and Heck, 1999 see p.24 above). However, in opening Heads' minds to the value of delegating more to others and involving them more collaboratively in visioning and planning for the future, it was noted that staff morale had risen and communications across the school had improved. Even where this development is still short of staff expectations, there is a strong sense that all schools have benefited from some aspect of a move towards more distributed leadership.

The Heads recognised the courage needed by some in undertaking the 360° appraisal as part of the LPSH. Even those who felt that their views were congruent with those of their staff, still recognised the difficulty in which some participants could be placed. Nevertheless, the benefit of this was viewed by all as positive in the end because it enabled participants to reflect on their own view of their impact in school improvement and the way that others see them. Consequently, many

made a shift in their approach and tried to move towards a more open, collegiate style of leadership, taking people with them and invoking the principles of good followership through effective leadership. Such reflection also led to a renewed energy and a drive for further improvement in their leadership to effect developments in the school.

The hardest aspect to identify was the impact that the LPSH has made on participants and their schools. The research on causal links between training and impact is still limited. This is because it is difficult to make direct links within a controlled situation. There are so many variables at work between participants receiving training in a specific programme and them showing outward signs of the impact that this has made on their work in schools. For this reason, the outcomes of this research come with a significant “health warning”. The study is not able to draw direct cause and effect linkages and can only make assumptions based on the perceptions of participants and their colleagues back in school. Despite these overarching reservations about the conclusions that can be drawn, participants in the research were able to recognise the limitations of measuring this impact on practice.

There was a strongly held view across all of the case study schools that the course had been beneficial. For some, this was focused on specific actions that followed the course. The majority cited improved communications and clearer delegation of responsibility to others. It was accepted that, with greater power sharing comes greater ownership and motivation by staff.

Perhaps the ultimate test of how beneficial the course was felt to be would be whether the Head, having completed the course, would advise others to sign up for LPSH. Certainly, the Head of School E would promote attendance but gives a warning:

“I would encourage them but I would also tell them that it does come with a real commitment and you have to be prepared for the fact that you will hear things that you don’t like.”

(School E Head: Visit 2)

From this work, it would appear that the LPSH has the power to motivate and challenge Heads who in turn have the power to reenergize the staff within their schools. Very little evidence of impact in terms of pupil outcomes or improved external relations was cited by the respondents. The way that they led their staff and the way that they engaged them in decision making processes clearly demonstrated a shift from managerial to leadership activities. Implicit within these dialogues was a view that the Heads had engaged in more strategic leadership as opposed to daily management of tasks. Whether it provides good value for money or is time efficient are outside the scope of this dissertation. There is no doubt that the impact of the programme is evident in the areas of developing a broader range of leadership styles and promoting a more authoritative style of leadership that engages followers in the process.

The NCSL has now decided to remove the LPSH as a taught course and have replaced it with a new programme called “Head for the Future”. The NCSL claim that it has kept “the best bits of LPSH – the feedback and diagnostics, the practical models of leadership and the debate with other Headteachers” whilst developing the programme to meet the “emerging challenges for headship” (NCSL, 2007b).

The success of LPSH as noted by participants has been recognised by the NCSL and they are trying to maintain the principles underpinned by the Hay research and revitalising the course as a more personalised

programme to meet the changing needs of school leadership. What has not taken place is the debate about those principles upon which the LPSH and this new programme are founded. It would be valuable to look again at these principles and question their validity in the new context of Executive Leadership, Federations and Trust Schools. If the role of the Headteacher changes to become aligned more with corporate delivery rather than leadership of learning, then it follows that there could be a need to change the elements of a school leadership training programme. Further research in this area would be a useful development from this research study.

The research that I have conducted has led to a deeper understanding of the impact that a training course can have in making school leaders reflect and take action on their styles of leadership. This reflection was based on a greater understanding of their own characteristics, skills and leadership traits as fed back to them through their own self review and the 360° appraisal of some of their colleagues. There are limitations to this (see page 66 above) which emphasises that the choice of appraisers remains in the hands of the Heads themselves, leaving some doubt as to the objectivity and range of respondents to reflect different levels of support from co-workers (see Fiedler, 1967 on page 63 above). Despite the limitations on self-selection of appraisers, the process has been recognised as valuable and has been maintained in the new programme that replaces the LPSH.

Measuring the impact of the programme is a complex process because of the variables involved in the actions of leaders, and the reactions of followers on the development of the school. Essentially, if impact is about *“the creation and sustaining of organisational arrangements in school to deliver and be accountable for externally constructed and assessed performance programmes”* (Gunter, 2005, p.182), judgments

about the impact of the LPSH programme should be measured against long term considerations of its effect on school leadership over time. This study was limited by time constraints and as such there is a need to engage in a more focused and longitudinal study to measure against this definition. However, this limitation being accepted, there is sound evidence that, in the short and intermediate term, the LPSH has impacted on the way that the participants led their schools and the way that others perceived a positive change in the work of the Headteachers involved.

In order to improve the leadership training of Heads, the NCSL should make a determined commitment to challenge their own perceptions of how effective Heads operate to create the climate for effective school leadership. Too much reliance on a model based on the identification of a select group of government identified effective Heads can cause people to question the validity of the sample and the consequent benchmarking that takes place through the 360° review process. Unless there is confidence in this sample, there can not be confidence in the LPSH training model.

There is a great deal of further research that could be undertaken in the broader field of assessing the impact of training on short and long-term outcomes. With so many variables involved, further development of models for assessing impact would be valuable. Simkins et al (2007) have begun to develop a model for assessing the effects of leadership programmes in their work on three leadership training courses run by NCSL. Further studies using and adapting this model would lead to a better understanding of how to measure the impact of courses like the LPSH in an effective and manageable way.

The next stage of research could usefully look at the new programme replacing the LPSH and whether it has managed to adapt the programme to offset the limitations of the LPSH. More openness regarding the selection of the Heads used as the benchmarking for assessment of course participants would be a useful first step in this process. Participants should feel confident about such measures and feel able to challenge the relevance and application of the principles that underpin the course. Only then will the leadership training and development programmes offered by the NCSL be further refined and be more able to stand up to scrutiny.

The research carried out in this study has been very beneficial in understanding the principles being applied from leadership theory to leadership practice. I believe that an effective leadership training programme should give participants the opportunity to make that link for themselves, based on clear data about how the programme has been formulated to meet participant needs. All through this study I have been concerned that there has been a sub-text of government influence on what staff at NCSL believe makes an effective Head. I remain sceptical about a one-size-fits-all model and would like to see the replacement of LPSH recognise that there are many ways that Heads can lead their schools and an infinite number of variables in the make up of those people to make effective Heads.

As a Headteacher and Leadership Trainer, I have been able to develop my own understanding of the process of leadership and how these processes influence those around me. I am more aware of the impact that I have on others within the organisation and of the importance of reflecting on actions as a result of their feedback.

The range of leadership programmes now on offer to aspirant and serving Heads is clearly understood along a continuum of development thought the NCSL's leadership development stages. This is a positive development and one that, in time, will have a significant impact on the quality of school leadership in the future. If it is to make the best impact, then each course within the leadership stages must be based on valid and reliable data, must draw on existing best practice and must pull from prior research in the field. Only then will we have a complete and incremental training programme fit for purpose and geared towards the individual needs and qualities of the participants.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

An outline of the LPSH Programme prepared for Headteachers in
Surrey Education Authority

Appendix II

RESEARCH TOOLS USED IN THE PILOT STUDY

1. Original Questionnaire for pilot study
2. Interview Schedule for Headteacher
3. Interview Schedule for staff and governor interviews Appendix III

Appendix III

Research Tools used in the Final Study

1. Interview Schedule for Headteacher Visit 1
2. Interview Schedule for staff and governor interviews Visit 1
3. Interview Schedule for Headteacher Visit 2
4. Interview Schedule for staff and governor interviews Visit 2

Appendix I

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An outline of the LPSH Programme prepared for Headteachers in
Surrey Education Authority

What is the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers? – (edited highlights)

The Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) was introduced in 1998 to help Headteachers review how their leadership impacts on school improvement. It is an innovative programme designed specifically for experienced, serving Headteachers. It is based on detailed research into effective school leadership and is structured to give in-depth feedback and diagnostic analysis.

LPSH is the core development programme within the National College for School Leadership's advanced stage of leadership. It builds on the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Headteacher Induction Programme (HIP) and reflects the National Standards for Headteachers.

LPSH provides serving Headteachers who have more than three years' experience, with an opportunity to take control of their learning and reflect on their leadership styles and potential impact, in a confidential environment of peers.

LPSH offers you the opportunity to:

- learn collaboratively with highly competent, experienced facilitators and Headteachers in a confidential setting
- focus on personal development, providing insights into your leadership styles and how they impact on school climate
- experiment with, and test hypotheses in, leadership and school development, looking at what makes a difference

LPSH is delivered in partnership with three regional providers in the north, middle and south of England.

What does the programme involve?

The programme can be seen over five discrete phases:

Purpose: to engage in self-directed development that will improve your leadership of the school and enable you to apply this development more widely

Programme delivered over 8 to 10 months
Pre-residential preparation:
Motivation to change

In advance of attending the three-day residential, you are asked to choose members of your school community to complete three online questionnaires. You also complete the online questionnaires yourself.

Three-day residential session: Understanding

The three-day residential session provides feedback on the analysis of your questionnaires.

Post-residential sessions: Integration, contracting for change, assessing impact

LPSH provides a six-week integration period in which you can continue reflecting, analysing, planning and experimenting with your issues in the context of your professional (and personal) life. After six weeks, you will reconvene with your group on day 4. The two follow-up days have been strategically placed to give support and guidance to you when you need it.

Day 4 is six weeks after the residential. It provides an opportunity to share your learning with your group. On day 4 you will contract with your co-coaching group, agreeing a well-defined change of behaviour and the first practical steps to achieving your goals.

Day 5 is approximately two terms after the residential. You will complete a re-run of questionnaires online prior to attending Day 5. This day provides an opportunity to reflect on the development undertaken and to assess impact.

Certificate of attendance

Upon completion of LPSH, you will be awarded a certificate of attendance signed by NCSL's Chief Executive.

During and post-programme opportunities

NCSL offers a range of additional leadership activities and programmes, including online learning via the NCSL Learning Gateway, to enable you to extend and continue your professional development both during and on completion of LPSH.

Back in your school

Once back in school, you will be encouraged to log onto Talking Heads and participate in the online community discussions and hotseat debates access worldwide information about good practice in school improvement access networks for exchanging information and ideas with others on effective leadership develop more confidence in using ICT develop your strategic leadership of ICT in relation to the curriculum and the management and administration of the school.

What support will there be throughout the programme?

LPSH enables you to take charge of your own learning. It is challenging, but the content and facilitation have been designed to offer a high level of support throughout, especially when you receive feedback on your completed questionnaires. Confidentiality, challenge and mutual support are the ground rules for collaborative learning throughout the programme, whether this is facilitated or in co-coaching groups. A dedicated helpline is available to all participants

For further details visit www.ncsl.org.uk

Appendix II

RESEARCH TOOLS USED IN THE PILOT STUDY

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Appendix II

1. QUESTIONNAIRE (PILOT)

As part of my research into the impact of leadership training on school heads, I would be grateful for your support in completing this short questionnaire. All responses to the questionnaire are anonymous. Please answer as many questions as you can. On completion, please place in the envelope provided and hand to *named contact by date of completion* who will return them to me. Thank you for your time in this research.

About You:

Male

Female

*Please circle the one that applies

Age: Please tick the appropriate box:

30 or Under

31-40

41-50

51 or over

1. Write down 6 words that you would use to describe a “good” head:

2. Here are some leadership characteristics of school heads. How well does your Headteacher meet these?

	Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Always
Shows sensitivity to others				
Has a clear aim for the school				
Never settles for second best				
Praises good work				
Empowers others without absolving responsibility				
Challenges weak teachers				

3. Circle the words that you think are a strength of your Headteacher

patientgood listenerhard workingable to make decisions

loyal to the schoolvisionarycharismatictough

good judge of situationsgood judge of peoplefriendlysensitive

always available in schoolable to delegateempowers staffpressurises staff

4. Put a number 1 – 10 in the box next to the following list of aims for a Headteacher. Place the number 1 next to the most important and so on:

Raising academic standards in public examinations	
Maintaining and upholding professional standards of staff	
Leading the School Management Team	
Promoting good staff development and career progression	
Being sympathetic to staff problems	
Setting up a clear line of communication	
Focusing efforts on school improvement	
Maintaining good order and pupil discipline in the school	
Supporting staff with parents and governors	
Evaluating the quality of teaching	

5. Please tick the relevant yes or no column for the following statements:

	YES	NO
You know the focus for the school improvement plan for the current school year		
You know the main features of the improvement plan for the next 3 years		
Pupil behaviour is improving		
You are confident that the school provides staff with good staff development		
Standards are rising		
There is a clear line management structure in place		
Financial resources are deployed effectively to support teaching		
The leadership of the head is strong		
The head is supported by a good leadership team		
There is a feel for the process of education on the part of the school's leadership		
The head presents a positive value system		
The school has intense interaction and communication		
There is collaborative planning and implementation of ideas		
There is a positive ethos and culture in the school		

6. In order to decide on the most dominant leadership style of your Head, grade the following as good, OK or poor.

	Good	OK	Poor
Authoritative: good strategic thinker, clear vision, drive for improvement			
Coercive: Holds people accountable, directs others, tight control			
Democratic: invites staff to make decisions by consensus, rarely gives negative feedback, a good listener			
Affiliative: promotes friendly interactions and is more concerned with people than tasks			
Pacesetter: leads by example, demands high performance and removes tasks from those unable to meet the standard.			
Coach: focus on long term development of staff, encourages staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses			

7. Your Head is planning to undertake the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads, a Headteacher training scheme. What changes in behaviour or leadership would you expect to see after attendance at this course?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
Please return this to name of *contact* by date for completion

Appendix II

2. LPSH INTERVIEW FOR HEADTEACHER: PILOT

What do you think are the most important characteristics of a good head?

What style of leadership do you expect of a good Headteacher?

What role should the Headteacher take in

School improvement?

Raising standards of discipline?

Raising standards of attainment?

If you were to reflect on areas for improvement, what issues would you raise?

The training programme for the LPSH focuses on the three areas of characteristics, leadership styles and context for school improvement. Why did you decide to do the LPSH?

How do you show your understanding of the different needs of different groups in the school?

How do you plan for change?

How do you uphold and maintain professional standards?

Are you ever satisfied with the way things are, the status quo?

Are you a team player or would you call yourself a lone leader?

What is your most dominant leadership style?

How do you promote staff development for colleagues?

Do you think you have respect in the school?

Why do you think that?

Do you see yourself as popular?

Do you like to be seen as popular?

Can you give examples of when you put the feelings of staff above the task to be achieved?

Do the staff have a positive view of the school?

How do you evaluate the quality of teaching in a school?

Is there a system for monitoring the effectiveness of lessons, systems and interactions?

Are the line management structures clear to all staff?

Do you think the school sets high standards of performance for pupils?

Is there a target for improvement for next year and beyond?

And beyond that?

Are staff clear about school improvement plans?

Do you think the staff discuss ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school?

What effects would you expect to see immediately after you have been on a 4-day LPSH training course?

What effects would you expect to see perhaps a term after you have been?

How will you know that impact is directly attributable to the 4-day training?

What areas do you think should be covered in a training programme for serving Heads?

Is there anything else you wish to add?

Thank you

Appendix II

3. LPSH INTERVIEWS FOR STAFF AND GOVERNORS: Pilot

What do you think are the most important characteristics of a good Head?

What style of leadership do you expect of a good Headteacher?

What role do you think the Headteacher should take in terms of school improvement?

In particular, what is the Head's role in terms of raising standards of discipline?

What about in terms of raising standards of attainment, the Head's role in that?

If you were to advise your Head about areas for improvement, what issues would you raise?

The training programme for the LPSH does follow those three areas of the Headteacher characteristics, leadership styles and the context for school improvement. Do you think he would benefit from a training programme focusing on these areas?

Do you think your Head understands the different needs of different groups in the school?

Can you give me an example of how he does that?

Do you think he plans effectively for change?

Can you give me an example of that?

Do you think he upholds and maintains professional standards?

How does he do that?

So he is a positive role model?

Do you think he is ever satisfied with the way things are (the status quo)?

Is your Head a team player or a lone leader?

How can you explain that?

What do you think is his most dominant leadership style?

Do you think he promotes staff development for colleagues?

Do you think there is respect in the school for the Head?

Do you think he sees himself as a popular Head?

Do you think he likes to be seen as a popular Head?

Do you think the Head puts the feelings of staff above the task to be done?

Can you give me an example of that? For example, when there is an important job that needs to be done and the needs of the staff have taken over that job to be completed?

Do staff have a positive view of the school?

When don't they?

Does the Head evaluate the quality of teaching in the school?

Do you know if there is a system for monitoring the effectiveness of lessons, systems and interactions?

Are the line management structures clear to all staff?

Do you think the school sets high standards of performance for pupils?

Why do you say that?

Is there a target for improvement for the next year and beyond?

Do you know what it is?

Do you know what the GCSE results will be this year?

Are staff clear about the school improvement plan?

So would you be able to tell me what the three most important priorities for the school are?

Do the staff discuss ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school?

How do they do that?

What effects would you expect to see immediately after the Head has been on a 4-day course covering the areas that we have been talking about?

What effects would you expect to see perhaps a term after the Head has been on the course?

And how would you know that the impact has been generated from his training on the LPSH?

What areas do you think should be covered in a training programme for serving Heads?

Is there anything else you wish to add?

Thank you

Appendix III

Research Tools used in the Final Study

1. Interview Schedule for Headteacher Visit 1
2. Interview Schedule for staff and governor interviews Visit 1
3. Interview Schedule for Headteacher Visit 2
4. Interview Schedule for staff and governor interviews Visit 2

Appendix III

1. LPSH Research Interview Schedule: Headteacher Visit 1

Thank you very much for seeing me today, I have a number of questions that I am going to go through. If you feel that we have gone off the beaten track and are talking about things that you don't think are relevant doesn't matter because they will come back round and be relevant, so just let it flow through into our conversation and a series of questions. I want you tell me a little bit about the school and its context so that we can put that into the frame of where your leadership style lies, almost as if you are trying to sell me this school in terms of what it does.

You have just recently attended the LPSH. Did the LPSH cover your needs as a Head?

What did you want it to do?

What were the key elements that you found useful in the programme?

What do you think are the most important characteristics of headship?

How do you marry the way that you are working and your view of headship to the way that leadership is represented by the LPSH?

Have you done a 360 degree appraisal before? If so, how did you do on the accountability section and how did the staff rate you?

For the sample questionnaires, they ask you to choose a number of people across the organisation. What guidance do you think you had on that?

Do you think it would have been better if the National College had chosen those people?

What was the key aspect of the training?

Do you think you are a popular head?

There are certain aspects of the course that promote a particular way of working in terms of headship. Do you think there is a particular model into which they are trying to ask you to fit?

What are the specific things that come out of LPSH for you, what have you done as a result of it, what has changed?

If I ask the staff what has been the impact of you going on this course in terms of what has happened in the school, do you think they will be able to say anything?

Have you shared this data with anybody else?

Anything else you want to say?

Has this been a beneficial and successful course for you?

If I come back in a year's time and ask you just that one question would you let me do that?

Thank you very much.

Appendix III

2. LPSH Interview Schedule: Staff/Governor

The purpose of this interview is to look at a particular training course that your Head has been on called the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads and I am trying to see if you have noticed any difference in the way that the Head leads and manages the school as a result of that or if you felt that there has been any changes in this school that may be attributable to the Head going on the course. We are going to talk about lots of different things and may go off on a tangent but don't worry about that because that actually may give us some clues about whether there is any impact of the course in school leadership. Tell me first of all what do you think your Head presents as the most important characteristics of headship, by that I mean if you were to describe the Head's headship to somebody else who didn't know the Head, how would you describe it?

Do you think the staff feel they are very well treated by the head?

Have you seen the Head develop over a period time?

So do you think the school has changed as a result of the Head's leadership?

Do you think the Head has changed as a result of leading this school?

Have you noticed any particular new initiatives or new changes that the Head has introduced that may well have come out of this programme?

How would you describe the Head's leadership style?

What about decision making - who makes the decisions around here?

What do you think the Head's role is in terms of raising standards?

Do you think that has a direct impact on raising standards?

If you were to advise the Head about one area upon which the Head needs to improve, what would it be?

Do you think the Head understands the different needs of the different people within the school?

Do the needs of staff come before the needs of the children?

Do you think the Head is ever satisfied with the way things are?

Do you think the Head is respected by the staff?

Have you noticed any change in the way that the Head has worked with staff over the recent past that may be a different way of working?

I know that it is difficult to think of things, but would you mind if I came back in a year and asked that same sort of question, just to see if you have noticed any impact and when you noticed things have changed?

Anything else you want to add?

Thanks very much.

Appendix III

3. LPSH Interview Schedule: Headteacher Visit 2

If you remember about a year ago we met to talk about the leadership programme for serving heads, the LPSH course run by the National College. I am interested to ask you a question now that I asked right at the very end of our first meeting about whether you feel it has had any impact. Have you noticed in yourself any changes in the way that you lead the school?

Do you think that anything on the LPSH prepared you for work that you have subsequently done in the school.

So in a nutshell would you say that the LPSH did or did not have an impact on the way that you lead the school?

Do you think there is any impact that can be noticed by staff?

What about students? Do you think students have noticed any change in the way that you have been leading the school?

If you came across a colleague who hadn't done LPSH would you encourage or dissuade them to do it?

Is there anything else you want to say about the programme?

Thank you very much

Appendix III

4. LPSH Interview Schedule: Staff/Governor Visit 2

If you remember about a year ago we met to talk about the leadership programme for serving heads, the LPSH course run by the National College. I am interested to ask you a question now that I asked right at the very end of our first meeting about whether you feel it has had any impact on the leadership of the Head. Have you noticed any changes in the way that the Head leads the school?

Do you think that anything on the LPSH prepared the Head for work subsequently done in the school?

So in a nutshell would you say that the LPSH did or did not have an impact on the way that the Head leads the school?

Do you think there is any impact that can be noticed by staff?

What about students? Do you think students have noticed any change in the way that the Head has been leading the school?

Is there anything else you want to say?

Thank you very much

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